

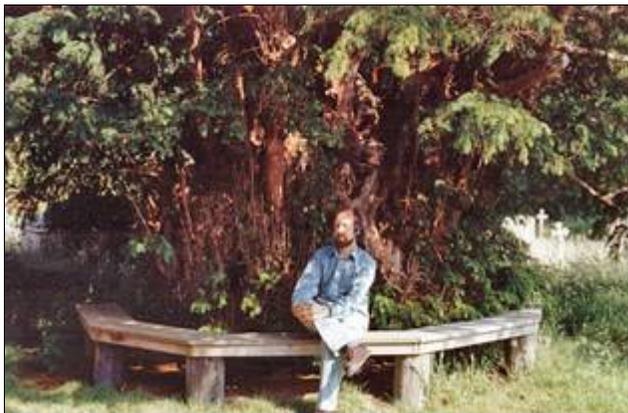
The oldest recorded parts of St Peter's church are 13th Century.

1853: The first record of this yew is found in the Sussex Archaeological Collections, in which we find the following description: 'There are two yew trees in the churchyard...., of very great size, and of an age probably coeval with the church itself'. This would seem a more satisfactory estimate of age for the largest yew than the estimated 1500 years found in Meredith's *Gazetteer* in *The Sacred Yew*.

1911: Horsfield's *History of Sussex* recorded 'several yews in the churchyard, of which two are especially fine and surrounded by seating'.

The yew in Chailey's churchyard has been claimed to stand in the centre of the county but JH Wilkes dismisses this claim in *Trees of the British Isles in History and Legend*, arguing that 'the site in relation to the irregular outline of Sussex does not qualify it' since the 'boundary has changed over the centuries, especially at the Hampshire border'.

2004: The more significant of the two male yews grows close to the south porch, with a seat surrounding two thirds of its circumference. I was able to gain access to the tree's centre at a height of 5/6'. It was filled with crumbling red heartwood showing signs of recent decay. Much finely sculpted dead sap wood could also be seen. Numerous young branches provided insurance of this healthy tree's future growth and development.



Girth

1994: 10m tall x 190 cm diameter @ 0.1m - Owen Johnson *The Sussex Tree Book*

1999: 19' 9" at the ground, swelling to almost 28' by 3' (exaggerated by twiggy growth) - Tim Hills

2004: 21' 5" close to the ground over much burry growth - Tim Hills



A second yew grows south west of the church and also provides seating. A 3' section of its bole is dead. Its hollow spaces up to a height of about 8' seem to have been filled with concrete. Upper parts of the tree had been damaged by fire or smoke, and the main growth had been truncated at a height of 12'/15'.

1994: 11m tall x 160 cm diameter @ 0.8m - Owen Johnson *The Sussex Tree Book*

1999: 16' 6" at 4' - Tim Hills

2004: 16' 8" at 3' - Tim Hills