

The presence of this huge yew tells us that this must have been a significant site long before the Normans built their church here. The tree has been burdened with an estimated age of 3000 years, found in Meredith's *Gazetteer* in *The Sacred Yew*. It is difficult to find evidence to support a planting date in 1000BC.



As for it being one of the 12 oldest yews in the country, while that is possible, a list of yews in order of age does not exist now and is unlikely to ever be produced. Its place as Sussex's 'senior' veteran, as described by Owen Johnson in *The Trees of Sussex*, cannot be disputed.

The female yew grows north west of the church. From its massive bole rise two straight and tall fluted branches (A). Between these at (B) a central branch is gradually closing around old growth. At (C) a large limb has been removed and the yew has responded with a new vertical branch (D).

On the other side of the tree facing the road 2 large limbs grow almost at right angles. The lower of these provides a good example of the buttressing that develops to support such branches.

At this time of the visit (1999) fresh new growth stood out at the end of each twig and dead leaves were being shed. The yew appeared in vigorous green health. The only disappointment was that a storage shed has been sited so that it almost touches the tree's trunk.

Girth:

1885: 31' 3" at 3' , when the Rev. Starling noted much spray on the tree.

1955: The Rev. R.T. Newcombe gave the following information to Swanton: 'Spray growths cleared away.....Interior hollow and diameter of cavity 7' x 6' 5". Signs of branches having been sawn off some time ago'. He recorded girths of 35' at the ground level and 32' at 3'.

1997: 14m tall x 296 cm diameter and 'filled up with humus almost to eye level'. Owen Johnson *The Sussex Tree Book*

1999: 34' 5" at the ground - Hills

