

KENT - churchyard sites with younger yews

April 2018

ASH-next-SANDWICH St. Nicholas at Ash TR284584 28/4/2007 Nicholas Cox

The church is 13th century. There are 6 yews here, the largest being 9' girth at 3' height. There is a lot of mixed planting in the churchyard and extension. Largest yew is 5m high. Some "lopping" has been carried out and there are several torn branches in the trees.

BURHAM St Mary TQ716620 10/10/2005 Cliff Hansford

The church dates back to Norman times, with traces of 13th and 15th century additions. It was abandoned in 1881 when a new church (since demolished) was built in a more convenient position. The church was rescued from dereliction in the 1950's by the Friends of Friendless Churches and is now lovingly cared for by The Churches Conservation Trust. (*Text based on Kent Churches, John E Vigar*).

Two yews here are both female. Neither has a girth of any significant size. The first yew features a canopy which seems out of all proportion to its humble girth of 8' 6". The second features an oil/sugar drum lid that has become well and truly embedded in its trunk.

CANTERBURY St Martin Cliff Hansford

In *The Sacred Yew*, Meredith described a yew here as 'old in 1880'. Two yews are noted here, growing in the western part of the churchyard. The largest girthed was about 10'.

CHISLET St Mary the Virgin TR224643 7/4/2002 Tim Hills

An avenue of 4 young yews leads to the church. Two further unprepossessing yews in the churchyard.

CROCKHAM HILL Holy Trinity TQ44405069 26/7/2009 Stephen Young

Recorded by the Ancient Tree Hunt (32321). It is given a girth of 380cm (12' 6") at 110cm. A photograph suggests that this is exaggerated by twiggy growth.

CUXTON St Michael 31/3/2014 Cliff Hansford

Younger yews are noted at this site.

DARENTH St Margaret of Antioch TQ560713 22/7/2002 Tim Hills

No old yew here or at South Darenth. 6 young yews of same/similar age grow on the north side of the church. They looked to me to be 30/50 years. There is a huge overgrown stump north of the church that is NOT yew.

DAVINGTON St Mary Magdalene & St Lawrence TR01106179 17/3/2014 Cliff Hansford

This church was once the nave of the now dismantled (not dissolved) 12th century, Benedictine nunnery. It has the distinction of being the oldest building in Faversham. It should be noted that from the churchyard a large yew canopy is visible in the grounds (Davington Priory) of the private house attached to the south side of the church. Unfortunately, any further assessment of the yew is restricted by a high perimeter wall.

Two yews stand either side of the northerly entrance. The largest is male with a girth of 9' 3" at 3' grows east of the entrance. A lower limb had been removed. No signs of hollowing. Beautiful draping canopy.

DENTON St Mary Magdalene TR217467 12/4/2002 Tim Hills

The King's England 1936 noted 'lovely trimmed yews, seen from the path to the church' and described them as the best bit of the village. In 2002 the old clipped hedges are no longer clipped.

FRENCH STREET nr Westerham TQ4587552819 6/4/2010 Todd

A small, walled, private burial ground. The yew is in the middle of a small (1/20th acre, 1/50th hectare), sloping, east facing, walled burial ground (possibly consecrated). There's one wrought iron gate with a huge padlock on it, so no access! Beside the certificate, in the glass case, there is a brief history (dated 1979) of the site indicating that the oldest legible inscription on any grave is 1685, though there are some illegible gravestones that might be older. Based on memory and a photo I would guess the circumference of the double trunk to be 3 metres, at near ground level and continuing the same up to a height of 1.5 metres.

GOODNESTONE St Bartholomew TR045616 17/3/2014 Cliff Hansford

A Norman church looked after by the Churches Conservation Trust. 3 younger yews grow in this churchyard.

HARTLIP St Michael and All Angels TQ839643 9/4/2002 Tim Hills

The King's England 1936 described 'old yews'. There are two at the front of the church and one slightly older at the back.

HAWKHURST St Laurence TQ755294 7/8/2007 Cliff Hansford

A limb almost the circumference as the tree has been removed at about 7'. A second limb of about 5' girth has been removed at the same height. There has been some cement filling. Girth of the female yew was 7' 10" at 3'.

HIGHAM St Mary TQ7127271465 31/3/2014 Cliff Hansford

Younger yews here.

HUCKING St Margaret TQ844583 9/4/2002 Tim Hills

The King's England 1936 noted 'a yew'. This no longer exists. A new yew about 3' high had been planted east of the church. Did this replace the yew reported in 1936?

HYTHE St Leonard TR161349 11/10/2011 Tim Hills

A letter (undated) to the Yew Tree Project (1990s) described a yew here as 'very large and in good condition'. There was no yew here fitting that description.

ICKHAM St John the Evangelist TR2220058135 28/4/2007 Nicholas Cox

3 imposing yews with wide crowns and soft reddish bark. Up to 9m tall. Girths: (1) multistemmed 19' girth, (2) 12' 6" girth and (3) 10' 6" - all measured at 3'.

KNOWLTON St Clement TR281532 7/4/2002 Tim Hills

The King's England 1936 described the church as 'shaded by a remarkable old yew with branches springing from the ground'. If they had looked at the other side of the churchyard he would have found a second yew, of similar nature to the first. The tree to the NNW has 2 main upright branches, one particularly fluted. It spreads from the ground in many directions. That to the SW has three main branches. Both trees were overwhelmed by the presence of large bay trees. Such yews cannot be measured or their age assessed.

LUDDENHAM St Mary TQ99256312 17/3/2014 Cliff Hansford

The church is in the care of the Church Conservation Trust. It is situated among farm buildings at Luddenham Court, a remote complex between pasture and marshland. 3 yews in this churchyard are of no significant size. The male west of church has girth of 6'. It is tall with a conical shape. A 2nd yew grows north of the church, where the ground is riddled with rabbit holes. The 3rd yew is a female east of the church. It is the largest of the three with a girth of 8' 8" at 3'.

MILSTEAD St Mary and the Holy Cross TQ903588 2/4/1999 Owen Johnson

The King's England 1936: 'The lychgate leading to the church is under an ancient yew'. The yew grows in the bank outside of the churchyard. Girth was probably about 12'.

NETTLESTEAD St Mary the Virgin TQ685521 23/7/2002 Tim Hills

Vaughan Cornish (1946) described the church as 'hidden behind yews'. On one side of the churchyard is an unclipped yew hedge, on another is a drop to a garden below a mix of yew and other trees. On a 3rd side are several large Irish Yews and other trees. Four Irish Yews also stand together near the entrance to the churchyard. Two yews grow side by side at the top of the wall by the entrance. Both are female, the larger measuring 10'10" at 2'. It has 3 large rising branches. West of the church is a yew stump 5' high.

NORTHBOURNE St. Augustine TR333522 29/4/2007 Nicholas Cox

A Sanders photo/drawing of 1863 shows yew. There are 5 in the churchyard. (1) male, 5m tall and girth of 8', south of the church. (2) male 6m tall, girth of 9', south of the church. (3) female 7m tall, girth of 10' 6", south of the church. (4) male 6m tall, girth of 9', NW of the church. (5) male 7m tall, girth of 11' 6". Girths taken at 3'.

OARE St Peter TR008634 17/3/2014 Cliff Hansford

2 quite small yews, one NE, the other E. Information from the church warden suggests that the two yews are about 100 years old, as her mother remembered them in 1923 as small yews planted either side of a descending stairway which led down to a part of the graveyard. Girth of each of these trees was 4' 6".

RODMERSHAM St Nicholas TQ927618 10/2/2014 Cliff Hansford

This church has been restored at various dates from 1875 to 1893. Within the church are various artefacts, the earliest dating back to the 12th century. Eight yews line the eastern churchyard wall. They are of mixed sex and vary in girth from 4' to 8'. Six young saplings, 4' tall and 6' to 7' apart, define the open southern perimeter of the churchyard.

SEVINGTON St Mary TR037409 8/4/2002 Tim Hills

The King's England 1936: 'In the churchyard are the four oldest inhabitants of Sevington, superb yews standing out nobly among the wealth of trees'. The 4 yews, 3 male and 1 female, grow in a line. They each measured around 10' in girth and bulge outwards at a height of 5'.

SHELDWICH St James TR011569 11/4/2002 Tim Hills

The King's England 1936 described 'two yews propped up in front of the fine old tower'. There were no propped yews and no yew with a girth above 10'.

SHOREHAM St Peter and St Paul TQ523616 22/7/2002 Tim Hills

Vaughan Cornish 1946 described 'a very fine old yew'. The yew, which grows NW of the church, had a girth of 10' 4" at 3'. I was told that the yew was threatened with felling in order to allow for an extension to the church. Also in the churchyard is a long avenue of clipped Irish Yews.

SNODLAND All Saints 31/3/2014 Cliff Hansford

Younger yews here.

SUTTON-AT-HONE St John the Baptist TQ553706 1999 Owen Johnson

A yew 'very hollow and open on E side' with a girth of 339cm.

SWANSCOMBE Parish church TQ604739 1999 Owen Johnson

A yew of which half the hollow bole remains. 377cm at 0.5m in 1999.

TEMPLE EWELL St Peter and St Paul TR287443 29/4/2007 Nicholas Cox

There are 16 yews in the churchyard, there being an avenue of 8 females to the (N of the church) church path, these are 12m+ in height, tall and close together. The largest girth is 8'.

There are another 4 to the boundary wall NNW of the church, males and females being up to 9m high and up to 8' girth.

N of the church is a single female 9m high and 13.5' girth at 3'.

W of the church is single female 9m (h), girth 11' at 3'.

S of the church is a single female 8m(h) 10' girth at 2'.

SE of the church is a male 8m(h) 7' 10" girth at 3'.

E of the church is a single female 7m(h) 10' 6" girth at 3'.

This is a superb site to see yew in its very tallest state.

TEYNHAM St Mary TQ966636 17/3/2014 Cliff Hansford

Female yew SW of the church with a girth of 8' at 3'. Lower branches reach the ground and there is possibly some layering taking place. Only one major limb removed, 7' above the ground.

WHITSTABLE All Saints TR117663 7/4/2002 Tim Hills

The King's England 1936 described an 'umbrella seat round the old yew at the door'. The yew immediately in front of the church once had a stone base around part of it which has now largely broken up. There are also 2 holes in the trunk at the same height - probably where the seat was fixed to the tree. It is not a significantly old yew.

WROTHAM St George TQ612592 22/7/2002 Tim Hills

A broken tree by a broken bench, with a fallen branch lying on the floor nearby. Male, east of the church and measuring 10' 3" at 2' – over ivy and including a dead stem.

