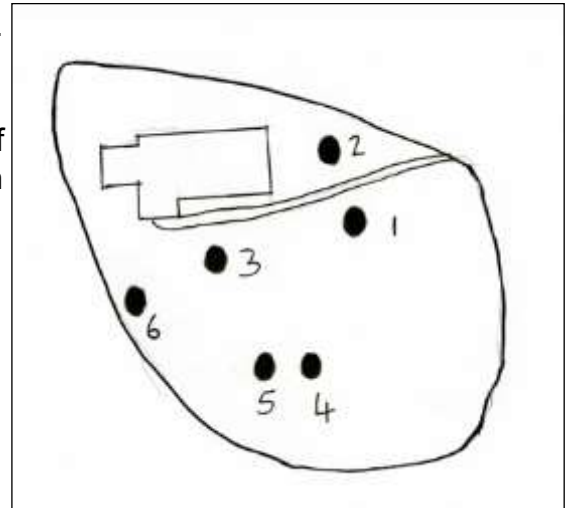


The church is sited to the north in a large circular churchyard. Nothing is known of the early history of this site.

The Woolhope Society visited in 1867: 'In the churchyard of Llanstephanwere some fine trees, one of which measured 22ft. 6in. in girth, and another 19ft. 6in'.



I visited in 1999, 2004 and 2012.

	1999	2004	2012
Tree 1	17' 9" at 1' above the roots	17' 5" at 2'	18' 3" at 1' and 17' 5" at 2'.
Tree 2	18' 2" at 1' over ivy.	18' 5" at 1'	18' 8" at 1'
Tree 3	22' 7" at the ground.	22' 5" at 1'	22' 5" close to ground
Tree 4	14' 2" at 2'	14' 3" at 1'	14' 4" at 1' and 13' 11" at 2'
Tree 5	Under 12'	11' 3" at 1'	not measured
Tree 6	Estimated 15'	13' 5" at 1'	13' 5" at 1'

2012



2012 Tree 1 is a horse shoe hollow female with a large internal stem. Opposite the opening is a further gap 3' high by 6" wide. The tree becomes a complete circle of wood at about 5', above which it divides into several branches, two of which are pulling away from the tree.



2016 Paul Wood: The tree's hollow centre shows through the gap on the east side of the tree. Ivy was beginning to cover the bole and some was removed, as seen below. Foliage had a yellow tinge. Girth was 18' 1" at 1' and 17' 5" at 2'.



Tree 2 on the plan grows east of the church. In 1999 ivy hid much of the bole, which divides into many branches at a height of about 8'. The positioning of the branches suggested that the tree has large hollow spaces.



Paul Wood 2016: The tree was inundated with ivy. Removing some of this I could see that the yew had consumed a roll of wire at some time in the past, it being just visible in one of the hollows with a length of about 1' hanging on the outside of the bole. The yew is quite hollow, but ivy prevented examination. The main leader branches looked fine and upright. Girth of 18' 7" (5.66m) was recorded at 1' over ivy.



1999: Tree 3 is female and the largest at this site. Most of the growth is carried on two thick upright branches.



Paul Wood 2016: The yew has become almost inundated with thick ivy and seemed in need of some help. Grass cuttings were being stored beneath the tree - even though only 30 metres away by the boundary wall is an area designated for disposal of churchyard waste. The yew was measured at ground level on the south side of the tree and a girth of 22' 6" (6.86m) was recorded over the ivy cover. Only one small area on the east side, around the hollow opening, was clear of ivy, and a rotting internal stem could be seen. Much fungus was noted, particularly the remains of *Laetiporus Sulphureus*, more commonly known as Chicken-of-the-Woods.





1999: Tree 4 is female, with a thick skin around its horse shoe hollow. An important part of its growth is supported by an internal stem (A).



Paul Wood 2016: It seemed to me that I was looking at the last remnants of dying wood just visible on the south side of the tree, suggesting that this tree is only a remnant of a once much larger tree. The possible line of the original tree is seen clearly in the photo right. Girth was the same as that recorded in 2012.

1999: Tree 5 is female, becoming hollow with heartwood ready to spill out.

Paul Wood 2016: A gnarly sinuous robust twiggly yew with a girth of 11' 4" (3.45m) at 1'.



1999: Tree 6, a male yew, appeared to consist of recent growth around a dead centre. It was not possible to get close to the tree through thistles, nettles, elder and long grass. Beneath it was a large heap of composting churchyard grasses. In 2004 it was still being used as a dumping ground for the churchyard grass clippings.



In 2016 Paul Wood recorded a bole hidden by twiggly growth and ivy. It had striking green foliage against the other yellow tinged yews. Girth at a height of 10" was 13' 7".