

The present church dates from the 14th century, but records indicate that there was a church in the 12th century on a site that is thought to date back to Saxon or even earlier times. The lane that passes through Thorpe Mandeville is part of the former drovers' route known as Banbury Lane.

1999: The male yew grows on a small mound SE of the church. It is completely hollow, its space filled to a height of 3', topped with a thin layer of rich black soil. Beneath this are pieces of crumbling red heartwood wood with white stringy roots and small internal stems.

From its bole rises a main branch as well as several limbs that stretch away from the tree, particularly in the direction of the road. The church leaflet describes a tree of 'exceptional size and unusual uniformity. It is one of the finest in the country being considerably over 1000 years old'. While undoubtedly a very old tree there is no evidence to support an age of 1000 years and more.

In 1945 *The King's England* noted 'a grand old trimmed yew with a trunk 15' round'. This was clearly an unmeasured observation, since RCB Gardner's measurement taken at around the same and published in Cornish's *Churchyard Yew and Immortality* presented a more realistic 19' 6" at 3' 6".

In 1999 I recorded 19' 6" at 1' and 20' 5" at 3'.

