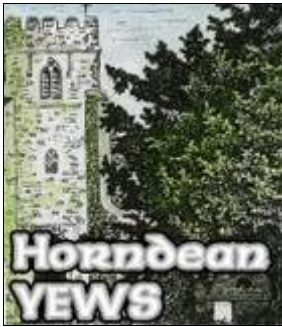


Horndean YEWs

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Horndean is an excellent centre for those interested in spotting yew trees. There are many within the parish boundary, although not very large or ancient they are a major feature of our churchyards, many gardens and copses.

On this page there are also descriptions of ancient and famous yews growing within a 20 mile radius of Horndean, including one of the greatest yew woods in Europe.

Churchyard Yews

1. Catherington churchyard

The oldest churchyard in the parish, there are three yew trees north of the church, all male, two in the north east corner are close together and could possibly have been one tree, a small young yew is growing amongst the graves near the west door and in the south east corner there is a rather unhealthy Irish yew near and ancient Field Maple. Near this corner there are the stumps of two yew trees that were felled after a storm, shown in pictures (1) and (2). One of the stumps (both hollow) has a holly tree growing out of the centre. These trees were known to have been planted in 1729 and can be seen in aerofilms pictures taken in the 1960s (3) and (4) and therefore give an age of around 280 years. They may have had connections with archery practice as further north along Catherington Lane is Butts cottage. Those trees on the north side of the church could be more than 300 years old, and the two in the north-east corner may have originated as one tree.

(1) 30th July 2008



(2) 2005



(3) Aerofilms
1960s



4 Aerofilm



2. Blendworth churchyard

The present church was built on a new site in 1852 to replace the little church of St Giles half a mile to the east and so the three yews in the churchyard are, assuming they were planted in the 1850s, around 150 years old. There are also 2 variegated hollies in front of the entrance porch which could also be of the same age. As you enter the churchyard through the SW gate a yew tree is on the left (5) and another is close to the west end of the church (6) and the same tree seen from the north side in (7), both trees had some 'pruning during 2008. The third large tree is nearer the road between the two entrance gates and has quite a large spread (8).

(5) 31st Dec 2008



(6) 31st Dec 2008



(7) 31st Dec 2008



(8) 3rd Dec 2007



3. St Giles churchyard has one old yew that is a prominent feature on the southern corner. The church itself was demolished in 1960 having been built in 1759 but there were earlier churches on the site going back to the 14th century. Most of the old pictures of St Giles show the mature yew but it would be difficult to suggest an age. A new flint wall has been built to retain the raised platform on which the tree is growing. Some other younger yews are on the north side of the churchyard. Pictures (9) to (11).

(9) 21st Nov 2007



(10) 22nd June 2008

(11) 18th Nov 2008



Proceeding to the north of Horndean along Lovedean Lane is Clanfield churchyard where the church recently suffered damage from a fire but fortunately this did not affect the fine yew tree in the churchyard seen here in picture (12).



The Ludmore Yew

is the largest and probably the oldest yew tree in the parish and lies on a steep bank of trees (mostly ash and beech) known as Ludmore Hanger (Map Ref SU683156). Access is not easy and it is private land (owner unknown), best from F.P.41 up the hill from Tiplengreen Fm. This tree is well hidden away and on a steep slope on chalky soil. It was measured in 1995 and had a girth of 22 feet. (Tape 4ft6in one side and near ground level on the uphill side). The tree has a sprawling circle of dead branches entwining around all sides and a remarkable feature is that it is host to a very large specimen of *Clematis vitalba*, the 'trunk' is shown in picture (16)

(13) Shows the Ludmore Yew in the centre taken from the other side of the valley on a very frosty morning in March 2001, (14) and (15) An outside and inside view of the yew and (16) shows the tangle of yew and Old Man's Beard branches.

(13) March 2001



(14) 11th Jan 2008



(15) 11th Jan 2008



(16) 11th Jan 2008



5. Other notable yew trees in Horndean

(17) This old yew at Deep Dell (SU69951218) is a survivor from before the Hazleton estate was built. It survived an application made by local residents to have it removed because it was a danger to young boys climbing the tree, also it did not appear very healthy or attractive, but as an urban tree it is a living contact with the past and could be over 200 years old.

(18) Further down the road to the north west is another yew with a wider spread, growing in a garden in Briar Close and is a feature, given a TPO (EH128) in July 1983.

(19) This yew is in the garden of the public house 'The Brewers Arm', no longer a Gales pub which has an uncertain future. No TPO but could now be in need of one.

(20) These two yew trees are in the grounds of Catherington House, once a retreat, now a private school and with a TPO (EH63) dated February 1978.

(17) 17th Nov 2008



(18) 17th Nov 2008



(19) Sept 1997



(20) 22nd Nov 2007



6. Horndean yews of Wayside and Woodland

(21) A solitary yew bordering the old track across Horndean Down leading up the the wind-mill. (SU71431513) Once a hedgerow on the west side of the track but little now left. The tree provides welcome shelter to walkers on stormy days.

(22) One of the yews on Hazleton Common in the larger hollow (SU70351205)

(23) and (24) Yews at Catherington Lith, the first (SU70031413) is at the NW end of the woodland which was given a woodland TPO (EH29) in November 1974, the other near the picnic site (SU70201405).

(21) 8th July 2008



(22) 17th Nov 2008



(23) 8th Dec 2008



(24) 8th Dec 2008



7. Hidden Yews, Problems and Sex

(25) There are a number of yews in Catherington that are hidden away in back gardens. Although most can be seen from roads or footpaths they can be clearly seen by their dark shapes in aerial photos, this photo taken by Aerofilms in the 1960s. There has been some concern about the health of the large oak near the centre of the picture as it appeared to be suffering from water shortage but it will hopefully recover with all the rain we had in 1980. The yew behind the thatched cottages has had considerable pruning since this picture was taken. Most of the Horndean yews are growing in chalky soil which suits them well.

(26) Sulphur Polypore or 'Chicken of the Woods (*Laetoporus sulphureus*), is one of the very few species of fungi that lives on yew trees. This fine specimen was growing in 2002 on a yew tree growing on the edge of the Portsmouth Road half-way between Merchistoun Park and Napier Hall. Very little else grows on the trunks of yew trees and this fungi is rarely seen.

(27) Who says nothing grows under yew trees ? In this picture a healthy growth of bracken has grown up to the trunk all round this tree which is just over our boundary in Havant Thicket where there are a good number of healthy yew trees with a very wide spread.

(28) Male and female flowers are borne on separate trees. The male flower is yellow and the tiny female flowers are green and produce these bright red berries contrasting with the dark green foliage and so is on a female tree. If possible the sex of the tree is recorded in the survey. The scarlet berries are harmless, but the seeds they contain are poisonous as is the rest of the tree.

(25) Aerofilms 1960?



(26) June 2002



(27)



(28) 16th October 2008



8. Famous Yews and Woods not far from Horndean

(29) and (30) The Farrington Yew between Selbourne and Alton (SU 712355) has a huge hollow shell and thought to be the oldest yew in Hampshire at over 3000 years old. Girth is just over 30ft. (31) and (32) The poor old Selbourne Yew (SU 741338) just after it was blown over in the 1990 gales and three months later when it was still alive. The tree did not survive but remains in the same position as a permanent monument to a tree made famous by Gilbert White. Girth was nearly 26ft. and age about 1300 years. There are many other old churchyard yews in the area worth a visit including Bedhampton, Boarhunt (27ft girth), Corhampton (24ft), Funtington (21ft), Hambledon, South Hayling (33ft), Stedham (30ft in W. Sussex), Steep, and Warblington.

(29) 12th Nov 2008



(30) 12th Nov 2008



(31) Jan 1990



(32) Mar 1990



Amongst local yew woods to visit are (33) Oxonbourne Down (SU 713185) Access via layby on the A3 at SU717183, a little known area managed jointly by HWT and QE Park, the nearest yew woods to Horndean. (34) and (35) Kingley Vale (SU 826100) regarded as the finest Yew Forest in Europe, the oldest veterans are on the south side and reached by a footpath from a car park at SU825089. (36) Finally there are a number of patches of yew trees at Old Winchester Hill, the picture shows one near the footpath around the south-east side of the reserve (SU 645206)

(33) 17th Oct 2008



(34) Aug 1990



(35) Aug 1990



(36) 13th Oct 2008

