

Copy for interest and information

STEVENTON CHURCH

Hampshire

Yew Tree, estimated approx. age 900 years

This is an exceptionally vigorous and well-shaped tree and in my opinion it is well worth a periodic inspection and attention to its maintenance as required.

The recent damage to upper branches seems to have been due to their hollow condition and insufficient strength to withstand the sudden extra strain caused by wind or (probably) weight of snow.

I have now removed the broken branches, cut and treated the broken ends on the main trunk, removed the most noticeable dead branches, also obstructions to the path under the tree, carried out essential pruning with regard to the general shaping and appearance of the tree, and disposed of all cuttings. The twisted branch near the corner of the Church has been treated and left in position, in order to continue growing and ultimately to fill the gap.

After a close examination today of the inside of the tree (with the aid of a good torch) and in view of the general good condition of this particular tree, also the fact that most old yews are remarkably wind-firm and resistant to decay, I am very doubtful if the very heavy cost of having the inside cleaned, treated and built up with a concrete core would be justified. I would, however, advise the use of strong supports or struts for the long, heavy branches, especially where they are at all hollow, though this may not be necessary for some considerable time.

Signed D. Spiers

24th October, 1970

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