

# The Ancient Yew Group

Tim Hills

## What we have achieved since July 2005

Since the launch of our web site in July 2005 we have brought together yew enthusiasts and organisations. Membership has been expanded to include individuals who are making a significant contribution to the locating of yews or working on aspects of their conservation. These individuals are responsible for locating many undocumented ancient yews, particularly on the Hampshire/Dorset border and in the north of Kent, while one contributor has sent us more than 700 yew images.

## Campaigns

Participation in successful campaigns to save threatened trees, such as Beltingham, South Brewham, Havant and Acton Beauchamp. These experiences have highlighted the poor protection provided by law and the lack of training provided to those empowered to decide the fate of an ancient tree. It also demonstrates the crucial role of local activists.

## Supporting projects

Supporting and being supported by such projects as Caring for Gods Acre, the Shropshire Hills AONB partnership, Kent & Medway Biological Records Centre.

## Web site

The web site [www.ancient-yew.org](http://www.ancient-yew.org) is constantly reviewed and updated. 454 new images have been added as well as information on 127 new sites. The gazetteer has been modified to allow an increase in the number of images that can be shown, enabling us to incorporate archive material.



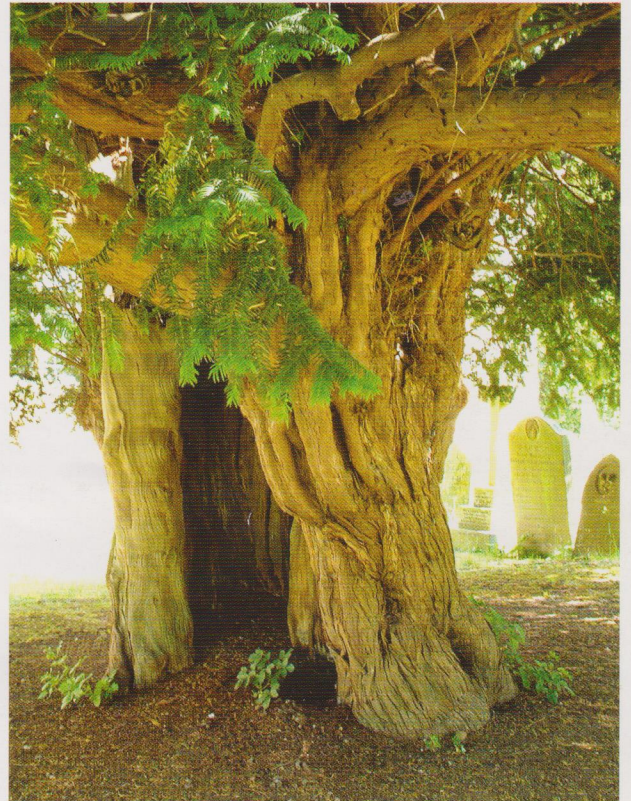
Ashford Carbonell, Shropshire (Geoff Garlick)

## International links

Ongoing links with Eibenfreund (Friends of the Yew). The AYG are hosting a visit this summer of about 40 members of Eibenfreund and the German Dendrological Society, who are visiting England and Wales to see some of our finest yew sites.

## New articles

The commissioning of new articles written by both members and non-Members. These include items about individual trees as well as advice on looking after yews.



Cradley, Herefordshire (Geoff Garlick)

## Conservation Foundation

Assisting the Conservation Foundation in development of their Yew Guardianship initiative.

## Contributing to TV

The raising of public awareness. The latest edition of Tree News features an article entitled *The Ancient Yews of Britain: Our neglected heritage*, tracing the history of our interest of yews. It finds that 'not all is well with our oldest and most mysterious trees'. We have contributed to TV and Radio and have featured as the Guardian's Campaign of the week. Bibi van der Zee's concluded this article by saying that The Ancient Yew Group "envisages a better, safer world for yews, with legal protection, a national consultancy on their care and feeding, research funding for studies into their growth patterns and history, a charitable trust for their conservation and somewhere, some day, a neglected churchyard bursting with yews, to be home to an ancient yew information centre with, let's hope, a teashop, perhaps serving scones, Eccles cakes, a profiterole or two...A dream worth having, if ever a dream was had."