

## New Map for Ancient Yew Group [www.ancient-yew.org](http://www.ancient-yew.org)

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The Ancient Yew Group (AYG) website is unrecognisable from its humble beginnings in 2005. Since that time, new information, photos and articles have been added on a monthly basis and our steady progress is archived in our What's New webpage. In the archive can be found several occasions when a great leap forward was taken in our knowledge and understanding of these trees. One such was in 2010 when AYG member Toby Hindson devised *A new yew classification*. For the first time it was possible to classify individual yew trees according to their likely age. The categories were named Ancient, Veteran or Notable and contain yews with a likely minimum age of 800 years, 500 years and 300 years respectively. This was particularly significant in being able to provide the Church in Wales and the Church of England with precise information about their 'majority shareholding' in Britain's oldest trees.

### We Love Yew Project

The classification paved the way for the production of an interactive YEW MAP, produced in collaboration with the Conservation Foundation. Their interest in the yew has resulted in many projects over the years, notably Yews for the Millennium, in which hundreds of parish churches planted a commemorative yew that had been grown from cuttings taken from some of Britain's oldest churchyard trees. More recently they instigated the We Love Yew project and approached the Ancient Yew Group with a view to creating an interactive map showing the locations of yew trees. It soon became clear that a map involving every yew site would be unwieldy – needing to show more than 2500 locations, and so it was decided to map only those sites that boast at least one ancient or veteran yew. This features almost 1000 locations, of which at the last count 697 are in England, 208 in Wales, 54 in France, 15 in Scotland, 10 in Ireland and 3 in Spain.

The symbols used on the map have been kept to a minimum. Not surprisingly it is the church symbol that appears most frequently, particularly in Wales, where 90% of their known ancient and veteran yews are in churchyards and in northern France, where all sites are churchyards. A castle denotes an historic site, which includes former religious sites. Two trees denote a woodland site, while a single tree represents one of the following locations: an estate, parkland, field, garden, footpath or boundary marker.

While regular computer users will have no difficulty in using the map, I would urge the technologically nervous to also give it a try at [www.ancient-yew.org](http://www.ancient-yew.org)

