

In the past:

1849: *The ecclesiastical and architectural topography of England* noted 'a fine and large yew-tree in the north-east corner of the churchyard'.

1860: *Handbook for travellers in Berks, Bucks and Oxfordshire* described 'a magnificent old yew-tree'.

1958: Much of the crown was 'broken away, but there are 3 or 4 large branches. It is in vigorous growth with small branches on the trunk'. In his *Yew Trees of England* Swanton added that the fine old tree deserved 'careful attention and tidying up. Ivy has invaded it to such an extent that it hangs over and hides the trunk on one side'.

1999: I found that all growth on this female tree is to one side of its substantial bole, which is solid to a height of about 8'. From a sloping platform of soil inside the tree I was able to see the formation of new roots, illustrating the tree's ability to use its own decaying material. Two main branches rise from the bole, while at the base of what was once a third, new growth is establishing itself. The tree leans towards the church, and when the large area of decaying sapwood (A) disappears it will possibly need propping up. Girth will also be significantly reduced. Foliage was not dense.



photos
above 1999 Tim Hills
below and right 2013 Peter Norton



By 2013 Peter Norton's photo shows the density of foliage to be much improved.



Girth
1958: 20' at the base and 25' 3" at 3' - Swanton
1999: 19' 2" at its lowest point, swelling to 27' at 4' - Hills
2013: Minimum girth was 19' at a mixture of root crown and 6" from the ground - Peter Norton

In 2013 Peter Norton also recorded this notable female yew south of the porch. It has a straight fluted trunk with a girth of 12' 3" at 2' from the top of the slope.



Outside of the churchyard and displayed behind protective railings was a fine example of old stocks, a familiar sight in Somerset churchyards, but uncommon elsewhere in England.

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