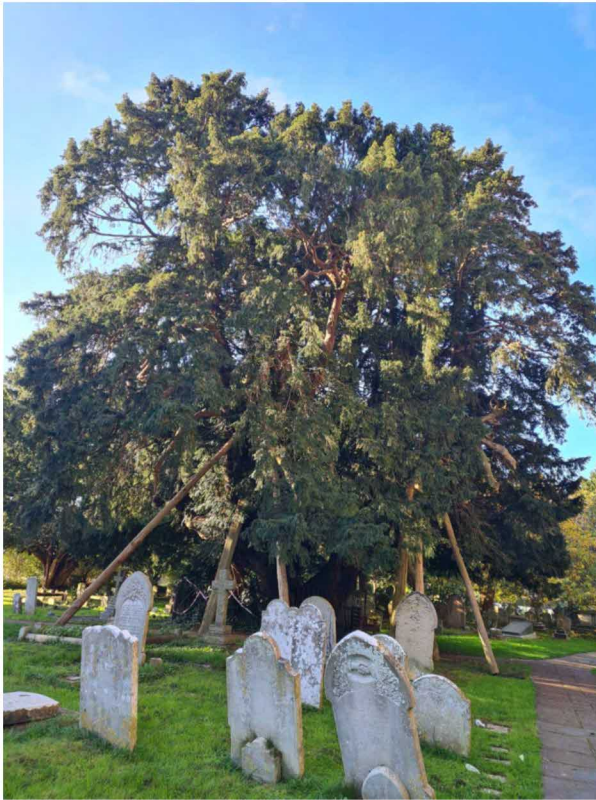
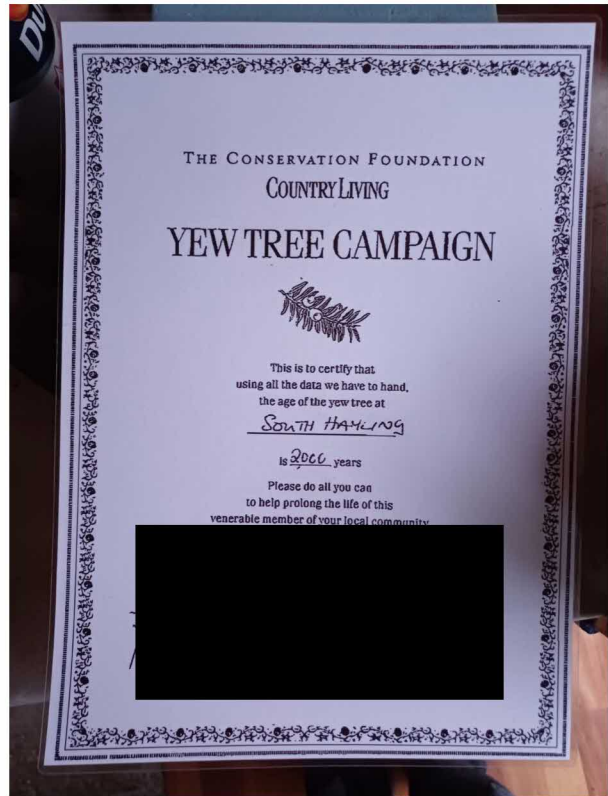


**St Mary's Church,
Church Road
Hayling Island
Application for reduction of Yew**

This document supports a Planning Application submitted by Andrew Skeet ONDipArb for reduction of ancient yew "11" in TPO 1615 at St Mary's churchyard.



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1. Summary

This ancient yew is decaying at the base and recently lost a large primary stem that fractured at ground level. To protect the tree against further structural damage and conserve it long term it needs intervention in the form of reducing its top weight.

2. The Tree

This national treasure has been aged at over 2000 years by recognised non invasive assessment.

The tree has tipped part to the east, settling at an angle of approximately 35° this likely occurred around 1875. Sometime after this the tree was propped with two or more large timbers. Two are still in place and are anecdotally in the region of 100 years old minimum. Meanwhile the west side of the tree has produced multiple vertical stems, this is a normal response of a tree that has tipped steeply and is working to recover balance and symmetry. Hence, this tree is in two halves – the east side is ancient and massive, leaning, propped stems, the west side is younger, more upright, denser reaction growth.

At the end of 2016 five chestnut props were added to the east side which was thought to be settling further. At this time a number of Cobra braces were installed.

Arboriculturalist's Report



Late summer 2024 a large diameter (500mm approx) primary stem broke at the base and fell into the churchyard. This stem was part of the more ancient east side of the tree. Reason for failure was extensive basal decay. This was partially due to combined passive deterioration over centuries and active decay by *Laetiporus sulphureus*. This stem had not been braced or propped.

Image 1 shows failure point

Image 2 shows examples of Laetiporus bracket remains on a primary stem close to the fracture. This stem is a likely candidate for failure.

It is often the case that a multi stem tree which loses a primary stem is more prone to further damage. This is due to fracturing of the base and an increase in how wind forces can act on the remaining structure.

My recommendation is that reduction work to lower the tree's centre of gravity, reduce its wind resistance (sail area) and start moving to a smaller lower and denser crown, should be carried out. Light reduction work on the east side was carried out when the props were fitted in 2016 with the intention further reduction would follow. This work will inevitably diminish the tree's appearance somewhat but is the best way of ensuring the welfare and maximum longevity of the most important and interesting ancient lower structure. As viewed principally from the east, it can be seen that the tree has already made good progress on forming a smaller lower crown which the proposed reduction work will be using as a guide



5. Description of Works with Images

The overall reason for proposed work is to protect the tree, as far as reasonably possible, from further structural failure, to work with the tree as it naturally retrenches its crown to be smaller, lower, denser and healthy long term. (As discussed above –in the Arboriculturalist's Report.)



Image 3: Remove 100mm dia x3m and 100mm dia x 4m laterals at approx 8m SE crown sector. Both marked yellow.



Image 4: Reduce primary stem in NE crown sector by 4m by cutting as marked image 4 where stem is approx 150mm dia

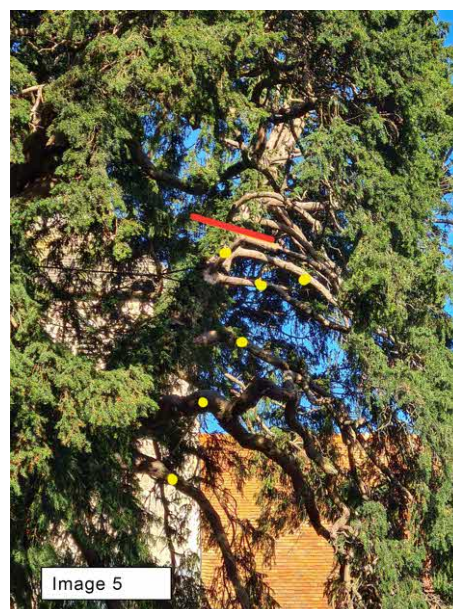


Image 5: Reduce primary stem in E crown sector where stem dia is approx 200mm dia and remove E facing lateral x6 as marked image 5 approx diameters from top down: 100mm, 75mm, 75mm, 125mm, 150mm, 125mm

The following images illustrate the envisaged crown profile after work is complete

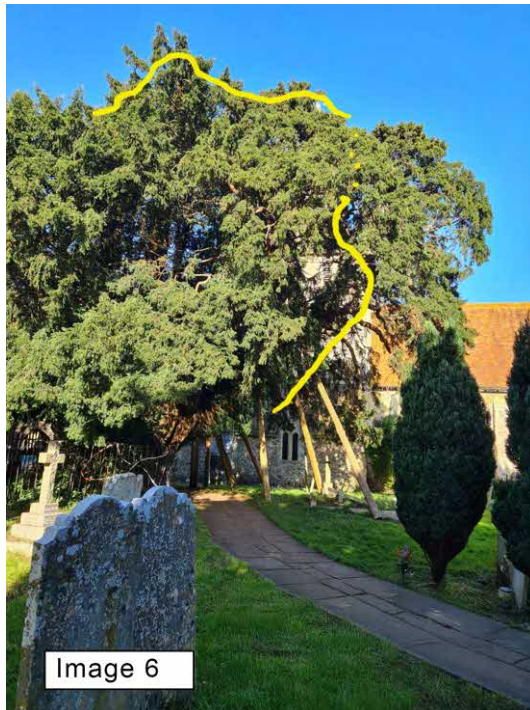


Image 6 - new crown profile viewed from S



Image 7 – new crown profile from E



Image 8 – new crown profile from near lych gate



Image 9 – new crown profile from approx NE (close to SE corner of church)



Image 10 – illustrating secondary crown being naturally formed by the tree

Andrew Skeet ONDipArb

December 2024