

Amenity Tree Evaluation

Instructions

The following evaluation has been carried out on the written instructions of The Parochial Church Council, St Margaret of Antioch, The St, Chilmark SP3 5AP.

Objectives

The evaluation is a *brief* statement of the quality, value, importance and/or condition of the tree detailed below and includes comment, opinion and recommendations as appropriate.

Evaluation Limitations

This evaluation was carried out from the ground using visual tree assessment methodology. Trees are living organisms whose health and overall condition can change rapidly. The conclusions and recommendations contained within this evaluation are valid for a period of three years. The period of validity may be reduced if significant changes occur to either the trees or to the landscape within the immediate proximity of the trees.

The site

The site is the Church of St Margaret of Antioch, The St, Chilmark SP3 5AP.

The Evaluation

The evaluation was carried out on the morning of Wednesday 24th September 2025.

HELLIS Solutions Ltd
Tel: 01935 814 110
Email: hello@hellis.biz
Website: www.hellis.biz



Findings

The tree, T1, is an English yew (*Taxus baccata*), please see photos 1 and 2 on page 4. T1 is a young tree in fair condition with a combined stem diameter of some 55cm, it is some 7.0m in height with an average crown spread of some 4.5m NESW.

The crown of T1 is asymmetrical following the removal of the Portuguese laurel from the southern aspect. It is reasonable to assume the crown on the southern aspect will develop to fill the gap.

The lower crown of the south east quadrant of T1 is touching the canopy of the adjacent lychgate and causing direct damage through physical contact.

Protected and Heritage Status

The site lies within the Chilmark Conservation Area; there are no Tree Preservation Orders in effect either on, or immediately adjacent to the site.

Reference: <https://wiltscouncil.maps.arcgis.com/>

There are no ancient or veteran trees on, or immediately adjacent to the site.

Reference: <https://ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk/>

The site is not an ancient woodland or a distinct form of ancient woodland such as a wood pasture or historic parkland.

Reference: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

The site is not a priority habitat and there are no priority habitats immediately adjacent to the site.

Reference: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

The church is Grade II* listed by Historic England. Additionally there are a number of grade II listed monuments within the churchyard.

Reference: <https://historicengland.org.uk/>

The above websites were referenced on Thursday 25th September 2025.

Amenity Value

The amenity value of a tree is typically based on its visibility, individual and wider impact.

Visibility: the tree is clearly visible to the general public.

Individual impact: the tree is of modest size and of moderate form with a remaining contribution of 40+ years and contributes to the character and appearance of the church, the churchyard and the immediate area.

Wider impact: the tree also contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the wider landscape.

T1 is a clearly visible tree that makes a moderate contribution to the local area as well as the wider landscape.

Recommendations

The branches forming the lower crown on the southeast quadrant should be shortened to provide a 1.8m clearance from the canopy of the lychgate. The remaining lower branches of T1 should be removed to provide a 2.1m clearance above ground level for ease of pedestrian movement and to remove a hiding place for potential miscreants. Additionally, the remaining lower crown should be judiciously pruned to achieve a visually balanced crown.

In General

Trees should be inspected following severe weather conditions, typically.

- a) strong winds (especially of gale force 8 or greater), particularly from an atypical direction,
- b) heavy rain reducing root adhesion due to soil saturation, and
- c) heavy snowfall leading to branch failure.

Signed: *Nicholas Hellis*

Dated: *30th September 2025*

Nicholas Hellis MArborA



Photo 1 (above): Yew T1 viewed from Barberry

Photo 2 (below): Yew T1 viewed from the church



Glossary of Evaluation Terms

Age Class:

- i. Young - a tree in the first third of average life expectancy for species.
- ii. Middle - a tree in the middle third of average life expectancy for species.
- iii. Mature - a tree in the last third of average life expectancy for species.
- iv. Over mature - a mature tree, which by reason of its physical or structural condition, has an estimated remaining contribution of less than 20 years.
- v. Ancient - 'a tree which, because of its great age, size or condition is of exceptional value culturally, in the landscape or for wildlife' English Nature.
- vi. Veteran - a tree which shows ancient characteristics such as those above. These may not just be due to age, but could result from natural damage, management, or the tree's environment' Ancient Tree Forum.

Stem Diameter: the diameter of the trunk measured at 1.5 metres above ground level.

Adventitious growth: growth arising or occurring sporadically or in other than the usual location is often an indicator of physiological stress.

Average Crown Spread: the average linear distance between the outermost branches of the lower crown.

Visual Tree Assessment (VTA): VTA is a 3-stage assessment of a tree as follows.

- 1) Visual inspection of the tree for defect symptoms and overall vitality. If there are no signs of any problems the assessment is concluded.
- 2) If a defect is suspected on the basis of the symptoms, the presence or absence of that defect must be confirmed by thorough examination.
- 3) If the defect is confirmed, it must be quantified and the strength of the remaining part of the tree evaluated.

Condition:

Unsuitable for retention - a tree in such a condition that it cannot realistically be retained as living tree in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 years.

Good - a tree of high quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40 years.

Fair - a tree of moderate quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years.

Poor - an unremarkable tree of limited merit or such impaired condition that it has an estimated remaining life expectancy of less than 20 years.