

Wool Churchyard

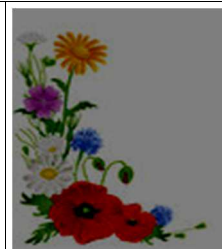
NATURE TRAIL

You are welcome to take a walk around the churchyard using this guide. There is also a History Trail which you can follow separately ...or you can do both trails together.

IMPORTANT - PLEASE...

- **be careful not to trip over the stone monuments. In particular, watch out for low stone kerbs, partly hidden by long grass;**
- **don't touch or lean against tall monuments as they may topple and cause injury;**
- **respect the privacy of others who may be visiting the churchyard to tend loved ones' graves.**

The churchyard provides a relatively undisturbed space for local wildlife. The churchyard is well managed and encourages the diversity of wildlife species. As you discover this diversity yourself think about this great gift, not just locally, but on a global scale and help us to maintain nature's wonder and glory with environmental awareness and ecological sensitivity. The flowers you see will depend on the time of year of your visit. Also, please note that certain parts of the churchyard are left un-mown at times to allow some species of plants to flower.



To assist you on this trail, there are, on the notice board in the Church porch, photographs of wild flowers. Some suggested answers can also be found there. The numbers shown on this sheet correspond to those on the sketch map and to the numbered Waymark posts around the churchyard.



1. YEW TREE

Each yew tree is either male or female – the female having the conspicuous rose-red berries. Although these berries are food for birds, the seeds, foliage and bark are poisonous to us. Yew, for many years is the preferred wood for making long bows – although often from outside the UK. Churchyard tradition began with Christian missionaries preaching under venerated yews, evergreen symbols of eternal life.

Q1: Which bird(s) feed on yew berries?

2. CHURCH WALLS

On the outside church walls you will see examples of non-flowering plants including lichens, mosses and ferns. Some of the ferns, eg. Harts Tongue fern (it resembles the tongue of a hart – an adult male red deer) should be recognisable. In the 1800s it was used as a medicinal plant. Mosses and lichens are a little harder to identify. A lichen always comprises two organisms – a fungus and an alga. Historically, they were a major source of dyes for clothing. They are also indicators of air quality.

Q2a: How many different colours of lichen can you see? Look also on the older gravestones on the trail.

Q2b: What does a luxuriant growth of lichen on trees indicate in terms of air quality?






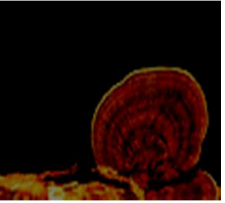
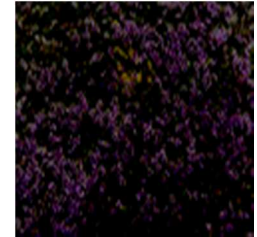
3. THE HEDGEHOG HOUSE (HH) & THE HEDGEROW BEHIND

The HH was built with the help of people from our local Moore Activity Daycare Centre, who also helped build the next boxes (Item 6). Hedgehogs are insectivores, being fierce consumers of various invertebrates including small snails, ground beetles, millipedes and woodlice. Slugs are eaten in damp conditions and hence the hedgehog is popular with gardeners. (Although they also eat beneficial earth worms!)

Q3a: Do you know why hedgehog numbers are on the decline?

Q3b: What environmental uses does the hedge behind the hedgehog house have?

Q3c: Can you identify any of the shrubs and trees in the hedgerow?

<p>4. TOP BOUNDARY FENCE(between churchyard extension and farmer's field) The farmer's field beyond the churchyard is noticeable for its glorious display of corn marigolds, some of which have migrated into the churchyard extension. The boundary fence is lined with tree saplings planted by the churchyard maintenance team in November 2012. The Woodland Trust donated the saplings, which included oak, hazel, hawthorn, rowan, beech and blackthorn. The saplings have grown well and you should be able to identify each type of tree. Q4a: What uses do trees have in the general environment? Q4b: Why is it important to protect and conserve our ancient woodland?</p>	
	<p>5. BUG HOTEL This is situated near the ground. It is mainly an Arthropod hotel, being home to insects, spiders, centipedes, woodlice and other invertebrate animals. In addition to being a home for these creatures, it is also a 'feeding area' for birds and small mammals – a sort of wildlife cafe! Q5. Can you name any birds and / or mammals which may feed in this cafe?</p>
<p>6. NEST BOXES Two were placed on the oak trees in 2015. Since then they have been used by great tits to produce eggs and young. The oak trees provide food and shelter for the birds. A third box is on a pine tree – can you find it? Q6a: What other birds might use these nest boxes. Q6b: What food do the birds find on the oak trees?</p>	
<p>In Autumn the ground around the oak trees produces numerous fungi. These are important organisms being so distinct from plants and animals that they have a separate kingdom. They are hugely important economically and ecologically in recycling nutrients, and are responsible for many plant and animal diseases. Q6c: Can you name some common fungi found in woodlands and grassland? Q6d: Can you name any fungal diseases in plants and animals?</p>	
<p>7. HEDGE Again, the hedgerow here has many environmental uses. You will see a number of flowering plants along the boundary including white and red deadnettles. Q7: Why are they called 'dead' nettles?</p>	
	<p>8. THE EASTER MOUND This is a special Easter memorial garden planted with garden plants but is encroached upon by various grasses which have to be managed. Some of the garden plants include herbs, such as rosemary and thyme, both of which are members of the mint family. Rosemary has medicinal properties - traditionally used to help alleviate muscle pain, improve memory, boost the immune and circulatory systems and promote hair growth. It was also used to make perfumes. Thyme has culinary, medicinal and ornamental uses. Ancient Egyptians used it for embalming; ancient Greeks for baths and burning as incense; the Romans for purifying rooms and flavouring cheese and liqueurs. Europeans used thyme as incense and on coffins as it was supposed to ensure passage into the next life. Q8a: What are basil and mint used for in cooking? Q8b: Which other common herbs, used in cooking, can you name?</p>

This Trail has been made possible by a grant from the East Stoke and Wool Community Chest.

Please replace this Trail guide in the rack for others to use – thank you.

Copies of the History and Nature Trails can be downloaded from our website. Comments and suggestions are very welcome. Please see noticeboard at Church Lane entrance for website and contact details.

You are welcome to look around the inside the church when not in use for Services.
A leaflet describing the interior can be found on the table just inside the door.