

Test pit excavation within currently occupied rural settlements – Results of the University of Cambridge CORS project in 2013

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In 2013 a ninth year of test pit excavation within currently occupied rural settlements (CORS) in East Anglia was carried out under the supervision of Access Cambridge Archaeology (ACA) directed by Carenza Lewis at the University of Cambridge. This programme engages members of the public in the archaeological investigation within currently occupied rural settlements with the aim of reconstructing the historic development of a number of these places. Summaries of the results are published annually in *Medieval Settlement Research* (Lewis 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013), and online <http://www.access.arch.cam.ac.uk/reports>. (NB The ACA website was redeveloped in 2013 as part of a university-wide overhaul of its web presence, and the ACA pages now have new addresses.) The ACA website includes pottery reports from each site and maps showing the distribution of pottery, period by period, from the prehistoric to the modern, for every settlement where test pit excavations have been carried out by ACA since 2005. Anyone wishing to explore further the summaries in this paper is advised to visit the website and read the text alongside the maps.

2013

In 2013, test pit excavation was carried out under ACA direction in nineteen different parishes, all but one in eastern England (fig 1). Ten of these were new additions to the ACA programme, with work in the others building on that carried out and reported on *Medieval Settlement Research* in earlier years.

2013 was a particularly busy year for the test pit excavation programme, as new funding from the University of Cambridge for the educational aspiration-raising Higher Education Field Academy (HEFA) allowed ACA to increase the number of HEFAs compared with 2012 when the programme had to be considerably scaled back due to funding constraints (Lewis 2013). At the same time, several new community test pit digging projects supervised by ACA were made possible through a collaboration between the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) *All Our Stories* fund and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) *Research for Community Heritage* (R4CH) strand which funded *Cambridge Community Heritage* (CCH), also directed by Carenza Lewis. CCH test pit excavations took place in 2013 at Toft,

Meldreth and West Wickham in Cambridgeshire and Shillington in Bedfordshire. Elsewhere, the Heritage Lottery Fund's *Managing a Masterpiece* programme funded a limited programme of test pit excavation in Little Waldingfield as one of its final projects in the Stour Valley before this major landscape partnership programme ended late in 2013.

Overall, 237 test pits were excavated in 2013, 104 of which were dug by members of the public during community test pit digging events, with the rest excavated by secondary school pupils taking part in the Higher Education Field Academy (HEFA) programme. As in previous years, some parishes where test pitting programme had taken place in previous years were not included in the 2013 programme, but may be returned to in the future.

Summaries of the ACA test pit excavations in 2013 are presented below. Sites are listed in alphabetical order by county and then by parish. Introductions to each settlement are included when reporting on that place for the first time. In the case of those places previously excavated by ACA and reported on in earlier Annual Reports of the Medieval Settlement Research Group, the account presented here provides an update to those earlier reports.

Data on pottery finds from the test pits are submitted each year to HERs in each county. Archive reports are prepared for each parish which include the finds from each test pit. Conclusions and an overall summary on the results are added when the decision is made that no further ACA test pitting will be carried out in that community. These reports will constitute the basis for fuller formal publication which will take place at a later stage in the project. The aims and methods of the HEFA CORS project have been outlined elsewhere (Lewis 2007b) and are detailed on the ACA website (<http://www.access.arch.cam.ac.uk/reports/cors>).

Bedfordshire

Shillington, Bedfordshire (NGR TL 126346)

The parish of Shillington today includes the formerly separate parish of Higham Gobion and the village of Pegsdon. The present village of Shillington is a large attenuated settlement extending over more than 2km along a succession of streets and lanes which

together form a large polygon. The majority of housing today lies at Hillfoot End (east of the church) and north of the road to Marquis Hill, with housing being continuous between these. A chalk hill rising c.20m above the surrounding land dominates the centre of the settlement, from the top of which the 14th century parish church of All Saint's affords clear views of the surrounding landscape and is visible from some distance. Settlement elsewhere in Shillington is arranged in several 'Ends' including Apsely End, Hanscombe End, Hillfoot End, Woodmer End and Bury End. Discrete farms sited around the settlement include Hanscombe End Farm, Moorhen Farm, Northley Farm, Lordship Farm, Upton End Farm and Clawders Hill Farm. The modern parish is large, encompassing these Ends and farms, as well as the hamlet of Pegsdon and the formerly separate small village of Higham Gobion.

The 19th century settlement of Shillington, as depicted on the first edition Ordnance Survey 6" map, was equally extensive but contained fewer houses and hence retained a very much more dispersed character. The greatest concentration of housing lay east of the church along Church Street, forming a nucleated double row but with several plots north of this street notably devoid of housing. Further contiguous housing lay along the lane leading north towards Hillfoot End. There were no houses north or west of the church. To the south, housing was intermittent along the north side of High Road, with none south of this road which continued as an interrupted row all the way north-east to Marquis Hill where the settlement petered out. Hillfoot End was an entirely separate hamlet of a dozen or so tightly abutting properties, comprising around a dozen or so cottages mostly south-east of a tiny triangular green where three lanes meet. Hanscombe End was extremely dispersed with a handful of properties of varying size arranged along a winding lane. Woodmer End comprised around 20 properties along a single lane, arranged as an interrupted row at the south end and a more compact double row to the north, where it merges with the smaller Bury End, which displayed a similar dispersed plan. Upton End comprised no more than five larger farm-like properties either side of the road towards Marquis Hill, where there was very little settlement at all. Northley Farm, Shillington Bury Farm were isolated sites with no near neighbours.

In late June 2013, 23 test pits were excavated in Shillington (fig 2), the majority in residential gardens with additional pits excavated on the garden allotments north of the church and in Shillington Lower School. Excavations were undertaken by residents of Shillington and members of the public participating in a CCH community archaeology project, run by Shillington History Society supervised by ACA and co-funded by the HLF and the AHRC.

The test pit excavations (Lewis and Pryor 2014) showed that the landscape was used by humans in the prehistoric period, apparently then favouring the area nearer the small brook running west of the prominent hill which dominates the land around the parish. Near this stream, SHI/13/11 produced several sherds of Bronze Age pottery constituting convincing evidence for undisturbed settlement or mortuary deposits in the immediate vicinity. Small quantities of pottery of Roman date came from five different sites, two of them away from the Brookside area, hinting at a dispersed pattern of settlement or agricultural land-use beyond the lower-lying zones. No evidence was found for any activity dating to the period between the 5th – 9th centuries AD, but Saxo-Norman pottery of 10th – 11th century date was found in two distinct concentrations nearly 1km apart, (south of the church and in Marquis Hill) suggesting more than one hamlet was present, possibly forming part of a semi-nucleated pattern of small settlements. The high medieval period saw these settlements grow in extent and density, while settlement at three other 'ends' seems to appear for the first time, indicating a pattern of mixed dispersed and nucleated settlement. This growth ceases in the late medieval period, with Shillington particularly badly affected in this period of widespread demographic and settlement contraction compared to many settlements in the eastern region. In the post-medieval period, however, the test pit data indicates that Shillington gradually recovered, with former dispersed settlements mostly reoccupied, although it did not achieve its pre-14th century levels and some of the medieval 'ends' remained uninhabited until the 19th century.

Cambridgeshire

Meldreth, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 376458)

The village of Meldreth is situated in south Cambridgeshire, 15km southwest of Cambridge, in the valley of the River Cam or Rhee which defines the northern edge of the parish boundary. The present village of Meldreth is broadly linear in layout arranged in a N-S orientation along the River Mel. Today, after infill in the 19th and 20th centuries, the settlement forms an almost continuous polyfocal village more than 3 km long running between the neighbouring settlements of Shepreth and Melbourn. The parish church of Holy Trinity is located at the northern edge of the modern settlement and dates from the late 12th century. Two moated sites and several mills once existed in the parish.

The First Edition Ordnance Survey 6" to 1 mile map shows that in the later 19th century settlement at Meldreth was divided into several discrete elements. The largest of these was arranged as a north-south-orientated linear row along High Street. This part of

the settlement was very regularly laid out, suggesting it was planned at some point. The properties were long and narrow and likely to preserve a much earlier arrangement, of either medieval or early modern date. The curving line of field boundaries contiguous with those of the residential plots west of the High Street hints at the possibility that these properties were laid out over medieval strip fields. The High Street settlement was in the 19th century still separated by 2-300m from three small clusters of settlement to its south, west and north, respectively sited around the railway station, Chiswick End and Manor Farm. Approximately 200m north-east of Manor Farm there was a smaller, less regular linear row running past the church and another, further north-east again, at North End, constituting a small green extending from College Farm towards Shepreth Common. With the exception of the cluster around the station, these settlement elements may relate to the five manors recorded in Meldreth in Domesday Book.

Over three weekends in June, July and August 2013, 32 test pits were excavated in Meldreth (fig 3). Excavations were undertaken by residents of the village and members of the public participating in a CCH community archaeology project, run by Meldreth History Society, supervised by ACA and co-funded by the HLF and the AHRC.

The results of the excavations (Lewis and Pryor 2014a) show that parts of the area covered by the present settlement was quite intensively used by humans in the prehistoric period, with unusually large volumes of Bronze Age pottery recovered from at least four different sites likely to be indicative of settlement and/or burial. Pottery of Roman date favours the south of the present village, and suggests settlement here then took the form of a dispersed scatter of small settlements such as farmsteads with arable fields to their north. The most notable occurrence lies beyond the southern limits of the present village at Bury Lane Farm (MEL/13/10 and MEL/13/21), both of which produced seven sherds. It is also interesting to note that MEL/13/16 (in Chiswick End) and nearby MEL/13/2 and MEL/13/3 also produced material of this date, albeit only in small amounts, hinting at the possibility that Chiswick, so distinctly separate in the historic period, may have had a Romano-British incarnation.

No evidence was found for any activity dating to the period between the 5th-9th centuries AD, but Saxo-Norman pottery was found widely throughout the present village, with particular concentrations on the manorial site of Topcliffe as well in the south of the village around Flambards moated site. Most of this was St Neots Ware, with smaller amounts of Stamford Ware. The complete absence of any Thetford ware from Meldreth is striking, and possibly suggests that this activity is likely to be post-

Conquest in date and that the medieval settlement originates in this period rather than earlier as Thetford Ware was no longer in use by 1100 AD, while St Neots continues in use until 1150/1200 AD and Stamford Ware until 1150 AD, possibly as late as 1200 AD (pers. comm. Paul Blinkhorn, e-mail 13&19/2/2014). This raises the possibility that settlement at Meldreth in the later Anglo-Saxon period (i.e. before the Norman Conquest) may well have been late, minimal or non-existent. While this seems a little surprising, given the known importance of the church, it does chime with the absence of any reference to Meldreth in pre-Conquest written sources, which is in contrast to neighbouring Melbourne. The similarity of these place names does hint that Meldreth and Melbourne were at an early date a single large 'Mel' estate which was gradually subdivided, a process which was still continuing in the Saxo-Norman period when new settlements were founded on land in Meldreth. These included a site of some importance, probably a manorial site established in the late 11th century, near Topcliffe Mill between the church and the stream. Another area of settlement, established at around the same date, also west of the stream, extended for at least 300m east of the present High Street. This settlement may have constituted a series of farmsteads, or a small village. While it is tempting to suggest that find-spots of Stamford Ware may correlate with manorial sites, not least because such a correlation certainly exists at Topcliffe, caution should be exercised in respect of other sites, as Stamford Ware is not exclusively found on higher status sites.

72% of the test pits in Meldreth excavated produced two or more sherds of pottery of high medieval date (early 12th – mid 14th century). This is considerably higher than the regional average of around 40% (Lewis Forthcoming 2014a), and suggests that Meldreth was then a large, flourishing community during this period. Zones which appear to be newly converted to settlement at this time include the area around Chiswick Farm, North End (near College Farm) and the west side of the High Street. Given that the property boundaries west of the High Street appear to follow the curving lines of earlier open strip fields (above), it may be deduced that settlement here was laid out over pre-existing open fields in the 12th or 13th centuries. Fine glazed medieval wares (Mill Green Ware (MEL/13/7 and MEL/13/25) and Surrey Whiteware (MEL/13/29)) are exclusively associated with the manorial moated sites at Topcliffe and Flambards, and the higher status of these sites is also hinted at by finds of a 12th – 13th century arrowhead from Topcliffe and a pewter mirror case of similar date from Flambards (MEL/13/30).

This growth ceases in the late medieval period, although Meldreth does not appear to be as badly

affected in this period of widespread demographic and settlement contraction as many settlements in the eastern region. The pattern at Meldreth seems to be one of thinning out of the settlement, rather than complete abandonment of some areas, although there is some indication that sites nearer the stream and at the southern end of the High Street are more seriously affected, but this to some extent reflects the abandonment of Flambards. Both this and the other manorial moated site of Topcliffe see a complete cessation of the pottery sequence by the end of the 14th century, and indeed these sites are amongst the most severely impacted of all. In contrast, at Chiswick and North End, the volume of pottery is greater for the late medieval period than the high medieval. In the post-medieval period, the test pit data indicates that Meldreth stagnated when compared with averages across the region, with the southern end of the settlement particularly badly affected.

Stapleford, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 473517)

Stapleford lies c. 10km south of Cambridge and c. 26km south-west of Newmarket between 10-20m OD on the north side of the River Granta c. 1km east of the point where this joins the River Cam west of Little Shelford. The settlement of Stapleford today appears to be a clustered nucleated village with little regular plan, lying mostly south and east of the medieval parish church. Recent development has left it entirely contiguous with the neighbouring village of Great Shelford, also previously investigated by HEFA test pit excavation (Lewis 2006, 40; 2007, 49; 2008, 61). The first edition 6-inch to 1 mile Ordnance Survey map shows Stapleford to be a discrete settlement arranged as an interrupted row along winding lanes east and west of the church, with a slightly more continuous ribbon of housing arranged along lanes which loop south of the church and run along the main valley bottom road (now the A1301) linking Great Shelford and Sawston. The settlement includes several farms, Vine Farm, Stapleford Hall, Greenhedge Farm and Manor Farm as well as a rectilinear moated site, and overall has a distinctly dispersed character.

Eight test pits were excavated in Stapleford in 2013 (fig 4), with a ninth 1m x 0.5 m pit added to further explore the area around the moated site as one team finished their test pit early and were able to carry out a small second excavation (<http://www.access.arch.cam.ac.uk/reports/cambridgeshire/stapleford>). Overall, very little pre-modern artefactual evidence was recovered. A single very small sherd of Romano-British pottery was found in STA/13/07 which may indicate the valley bottom area along the present A1301 was in low-intensity use at this time, perhaps as arable or perhaps merely as a road. No pottery whatsoever was found of

Anglo-Saxon (5th – 11th century) date, and just one pit, STA/13/05, near the site of Vine Farm, produced high medieval pottery, totalling just two sherds. The only find of late medieval pottery, a single sherd, came from a different site, STA/13/03 on the site of Stapleford Hall. Two different sites again (STA/13/04 and STA/13/04) produced very small amounts of post-medieval pottery.

It is difficult to make any meaningful observations from the small number of pits excavated so far, especially with so little material recovered, although the impression so far is that the present settlement of Stapleford was a small thinly inhabited (at best) place throughout the pre-modern period.

Swaffham Bulbeck, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 555625)

Fourteen test pits were excavated by HEFA students in Swaffham Bulbeck in 2013, adding to those completed in 2012 to make a total of 24 (fig 5). Two pits produced pottery of Bronze Age date, one of which (SBU /13/9) totalled three large sherds along with struck and fire-cracked flint, sufficient to infer with some confidence intensive activity in the vicinity, possibly relating to settlement or mortuary practice. No Romano-British material was found, but as in 2012, a significant amount of late Anglo-Saxon pottery was recovered, found in a total of four pits (SBU/13/1, 2, 13 and 14). Although two of these (SBU/13/1 and SBU/13/14 produced just a single sherd, overall, they reinforce the general pattern observed in 2012 of settlement at this date clustered around the church, with smaller amounts of pottery perhaps indicating the extent of arable closer to the river and north of Quarry Lane.

Finds of high medieval pottery at SBU/13/8 and SBU/13/9 confirmed the pattern noted in 2012 that the settlement at Commercial End was founded at this time as the settlement extended north. The developmental trajectory in the late medieval period seems to be mixed, as the area around the church produced considerably less pottery of this date, while some sites to the north produced more pottery than for the high medieval period, an unusual phenomenon in this area.

Toft, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 359560)

The village of Toft lies 9km south-west of Cambridge and 18km south-east of St Neots, and is also just 10km north of Meldreth (discussed above). Toft is one of several parishes whose southern boundary is formed by the Bourn Brook, which rises a few miles west of Toft and joins the River Cam just south of Grantchester. Recent research on the Bourn Valley parishes has identified an extended system of medieval field boundaries and trackways covering an

area of around 72km, many of which extend for over a kilometre across the valley (Oosthuizen 2003).

The present village of Toft comprises a nucleated settlement arranged either side of two main axes joining around a bend in the main B1046 road. Two parallel rows of housing are located along High Street and School Lane, with another row running perpendicular to these along Comberton Road towards the top of the hill, with a further housing estate located just to the north in Miller's Road, Mill Lane and Glebe Close. The church is largely isolated south east of the present village.

The 19th century settlement was much smaller and more dispersed, arranged loosely around a square grid of lanes between Comberton Road and the Bourn Brook. The most compact part of the settlement then was arranged as a linear row along the Comberton Road near its junction with Church Road. Settlement along the northern end of the High Street was much more intermittent, constituting little more than a Methodist chapel and the Black Bull inn. This is separated by some 150m from a small single row of farms and cottages north of Brookside (then called Water Row), which appears to constitute a separate hamlet. The diffuse character of settlement in this area is further emphasised by the presence of just a couple of cottages along School Lane and Pinford Well Lane, and by the location of St Andrews Parish church nearly half a kilometre from the settlement along Comberton Road or Water Lane, with only the Rectory and a small terrace of three cottages for company. The historic parish church of Saint Andrews and associated rectory (Toft Manor) lie SE of the main residential settlement surrounded by fields on all sides with no evidence for previous housing near the church itself, one of the curious features of the modern village. The existence has been posited of a middle Saxon settlement near the present parish church of Saint Andrews, and abandoned medieval settlement identified along both sides of Bourn Brook (Oosthuizen 1997:47).

Over two weekends in July and November 2013, 16 test pits were excavated in Toft (fig 6). Excavations were undertaken by residents of the village and members of the public participating in a CCH community archaeology project, run by Toft History Society, supervised by ACA and co-funded by the HLF and the AHRC.

The results of the excavations (Lewis and Pryor 2014b) show that the excavated areas appear to have been intermittently and lightly used by humans in the prehistoric period. The clustering of worked flint of certain and likely Neolithic date from pits TOF/13/03, TOF/13/04, TOF/13/13 and TOF/13/14 along Brookside possibly indicates settlement along the northern side of the stream. More substantially,

more tightly dated pottery of Roman date shows settlement to have been present just beyond the south-eastern limits of the present settlement.

Just one test pit in Toft in 2013 (TOF/13/13) produced pottery dating to the early or middle Anglo-Saxon period (c. 410-850 AD), possibly suggesting that some part of the settlement may have continued on into the early-Anglo-Saxon period, as this is the same area where the Romano-British pottery was most concentrated. Activity in the later Anglo-Saxon period is clearly indicated in this same stream-side location, south-east of the present village, north of the stream along Brookside as it turns into Church Lane. It is unclear whether the early/middle Anglo-Saxon pottery relates to late continuation of the Romano-British settlement, or the earliest antecedent of the 10th/11th century settlement. It may represent a 'pre-village-nucleus' of the sort identified in central England (Jones and Page 2007). What is more clearly apparent is that by the 10th or 11th century, a small settlement, possibly already by then a nucleated village, was present north of the brook and possibly extending up Church Road and Pinford Well Lane.

All but three of the test pits in Toft produced pottery of high medieval date (early 12th – mid 14th century), showing that the settlement was thriving in this period. Notably, however, TOF/13/3 produced no pottery of this date despite yielding significant quantities of late Anglo-Saxon pottery. This is unusual, and hints at the possibility that the settlement footprint within the landscape did not become firmly fixed until after the Norman Conquest, but instead shifted around until then. That Toft grew in size in the high medieval period is indicated by the appearance of pottery of this date in areas lacking material of earlier date, namely south of the brook and west of the High Street.

By contrast, only one pit produced more than a single sherd of late medieval (late 14th – mid 16th century), suggesting a significant fall in population. The area of settlement east of Brookside and south of the brook appears to have been abandoned at this time, although areas further north seem possibly to have fared a little better (although it should be noted that finds of single sherds of this date are what would normally be expected from a non-settlement use such as manuring of arable).

When the settlement began to recover, possibly rather falteringly, in the post medieval period, its focus appears to have shifted north towards the Comberton Road, with the stream-side settlement remaining permanently deserted.

West Wickham, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 613492)

West Wickham lies c. 19km south-east of Cambridge near the county boundary between Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. The present nucleated village of West Wickham is located near the centre of the parish and consists of a linear development along the High Street running north-east from the parish church of St. Mary and incorporating Burton End (at the far end of the High Street from the church). The detached hamlet of Streetly End lies more than 1km to the south of the parish, and Yen Hall is an isolated single dwelling to the north. The names of Wickham, Streetly and Yen Hall are all identifiable in Domesday Book as taxable estates. The First Edition of the Ordnance Survey 6" to one mile map shows West Wickham and Burton End to be discrete linear settlements in the mid-19th century, arranged (as today) along the same street but separated by a gap of more than 300m. The settlements at Streetly End and Yen Hall, on the other hand, appear little different to today.

Eighteen test pits were dug in West Wickham (including Burton End) and Streetly End (fig 7) over one weekend by residents of the village along with friends and families, as a CCH community project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund *All Our Stories* scheme. The distribution of worked flint indicates that the landscape around West Wickham was widely but lightly used by humans in the prehistoric period. Unusually, test pits WWI/13/9 and WWI/13/14 both contained Bronze Age pottery sherds, suggestive of settlement or mortuary activity in the vicinity. No evidence of Roman date at all was found in the test pits within the present village, with the earliest post-prehistoric finds dating to the Anglo-Norman period, which were all found near the parish church of St. Mary. None of these produced more than a single sherd, however, and so it is difficult to be certain whether this is indicative of habitation in the near vicinity, or some less intensive use such as manuring of arable fields. On balance, it seems reasonable to infer that more intensive activity was taking place at this time at West Wickham than at either of the 'ends', and it is tempting to infer that a small hamlet, perhaps arranged as a thinly occupied interrupted row, was present at West Wickham at a date before the foundation of Streetly End or Burton End.

Nine of the test pits (50%) produced two or more sherds of pottery of high medieval date, a little above average for the eastern region where excavation of more than 1,500 test pits has shown around 40% to produce two or more sherds of high medieval pottery (Lewis 2014 forthcoming). The test pit data suggest that settlement at may have taken the form of a small nucleated village around a green extending east from the church of St Mary. In Burton End, finds of 13 sherds from WWI/13/14 strongly infer the presence of settlement in the immediate vicinity, with finds of

smaller numbers of sherds from WWI/13/16 (four sherds) and WWI/13/17 (two sherds) supporting the suggestion that activity was increasing in intensity in these parts of the settlement. Without a larger number of pits excavated, it is impossible to say what form these settlements took, or how large or densely populated they were, but it appears likely that settlements at both Streetly End and Burton End are likely to be later in date than West Wickham, but were in existence by 1100-1200 AD.

This process of settlement expansion represented by the founding and growth of these elements of the settlement pattern was abruptly arrested in the later medieval period, which saw the settlement pattern particularly severely scaled back. Only 11% of the excavated test pits contained more than a single sherd of late medieval pottery, placing it well below the regional average in which around 20% of pits produce two or more sherds of this date (Lewis 2014 forthcoming). Test pits around the present site of Manor Farm contained little or no pottery from this period indicating that they been abandoned or put to other use by this time. This decline does not appear to have been evenly felt across the parish of West Wickham, however, as in Streetly End all test pits yielded sherds from this period, with no sign of decline. In contrast, no material whatsoever of late medieval date was recovered from Burton End, and if this is a true representation of settlement here during this period, this area would appear to have been entirely deserted in the post-Black Death late medieval era.

Recovery from the later medieval decline is apparent in the post-medieval period and appears to be robust, as all but three of the excavated pits produced pottery of this date, most in considerable quantities. Interestingly, the semi-dispersed character of the hamlet-dominated high medieval settlement pattern was maintained and remained so until the 20th century.

Willingham, Cambridgeshire (NGR TL 405705)

Eight test pits were excavated by HEFA students in Willingham in 2013, adding to those dug in 2009 to bring the total to 34 (fig 8). No additional Romano-British material was found, but a single small sherd of early Anglo-Saxon handmade pottery (c. 450-700AD) was found in WIL/13/01, c. 0.7km north of the sites which previously produced material of this date in the centre of the present village, although close to pits that previously produce small amounts of Roman pottery (Lewis 2009, 47-8) The 2013 pits generally yielded very little in the way of finds, with just three pits producing a total of five sherds of high medieval pottery, none of later medieval date whatsoever and very little post-medieval material. This may be partly explained by the fact that several

of the pits were located towards the periphery of the present village, and suggest these areas were in use as fields rather than settlement until the 20th century.

Essex

Daws Heath, Essex (NGR TL 813886)

Daws Heath is located in south Essex c. 6km west of Southend and c. 9km east of Basildon. In an area which is generally very built up, the village today is sited in secluded wooded countryside less than 1km south of the busy A127. The settlement today is arranged in a large block mostly south of an east-west-orientated lane, dominated by a triangular arrangement of minor streets. Although quite large, the settlement retains a rural character to it. There is little historical data on Daws Heath, with place names deriving from medieval records not alluding to habitation, including an association with Philip Dawe in 1285 and Wyburns (north of the junction between Dawes Heath Road and Bramble Road) recorded as Wyberneswde in 1253 (Reaney 1935, 172-3). Local histories record that until recently the area was largely given over to woodland industries such as charcoal burning, supplemented by smuggling from the nearby coast (http://www.hadleighhistory.org.uk/page/daws_heath, accessed July 2014). Daws Heath lies within Thundersley parish, but gained a non-conformist chapel in the mid-19th century (founded by the Peculiar People movement), originally sited in Western Road but now rebuilt on Daws Heath Road. The First Edition of the Ordnance Survey 6" to one mile map shows the late 19th century settlement to be very much smaller than it is today. The triangular arrangement of roads is clearly present, but with just a dozen or so cottages strung very intermittently along these, supplemented by three larger discrete homesteads/farm complexes present at Great Wyburns (south of the present Tylersset Farm), Haresland and Bramblehall. Otherwise the area is one of small fields and woodland.

Twelve test pits were dug at Daws Heath in 2013 by HEFA students and local historical society members (fig 9), sited widely across the present settlement including at Wyburns/Tylersset (DHE/13/07), Haresland (DHE/13/08) and Bramblehall (DHE/13/10). Very few identifiably pre-modern artefacts were recovered from any of the test pits. Many of the Daws Heath test pits produced worked flint, especially along the northern side of the present settlement, suggesting long-standing low-intensity use of the area. Notably, a worked flint flake from DHE/13/01 had been retouched along its ventral/concave side and was recovered from the top of a well-defined post hole, suggesting a structure of some sort was present in the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age.

Other than this, however, the earliest material recovered dates to the high medieval period. Only very small amounts of this were recovered, with DHE/13/08 and DHE/13/12 each producing just a single small sherd. Although this number of sherds is insufficient to infer settlement in the vicinity, it is interesting to note that both these pits were on or near sites whose names are recorded in medieval documents (Wyburns and Haresland). Three pits produced pottery of later medieval date, a slight increase when compared with the earlier period. Two of these are the same sites which produced high medieval pottery, and the third (DHE/13/4) is within 50m of DHE/13/12. All but one (DHE/13/11) of the 2013 pits produced post-medieval pottery, but in very modest quantities, with only two sites producing more than four sherds and none more than 10.

Although it is difficult to make any substantive observations based on the relatively small number of pits excavated so far, it does appear that the area, while one of perhaps quite widespread prehistoric activity, was not much used in the Roman and Anglo-Saxon period, and sparsely settled, if at all in the medieval period. There is little evidence for any decline in this low level of activity in the later medieval period. Activity in the post-medieval period seems to have been more widespread rather than seated in just two locations, but remained very sparse until, it would seem, the 20th century.

Manuden, Essex (NGR TL 495265)

A further 11 test pits were excavated in Manuden in 2013, adding to those previously dug in 2011 and bringing the total to 18 (fig 10). While investigation previously focussed on the centre of the small hamlet near the church, in 2013 this broadened out across the landscape which is today one of dispersed farmsteads and small greens including Parsonage Farm (MAN/13/06), Uppend (MAN/13/07), Mallow's Green/Saucemeres (MAN/13/8) and Battles Hall, all of which are the sites of farms marked in the 19th century on the 6" to 1 mile Ordnance Survey map. Saucemeres is associated with a surname recorded in 1248 and Mallow's Green named in 1777 (Reaney 1935, 552-3). The excavations showed one pit (MAN/13/03) to contain a sherd of Iron Age pottery, but as in 2011, no material of Roman date was found in any of the pits. In contrast with 2011, however, three pits produced pottery of Anglo-Saxon date, the first material of this date to be found in Manuden. A single sherd of early Anglo-Saxon handmade pottery (c. 450-700AD) in MAN/13/11 (near the present parish church) is a very unusual find from test pitting in eastern England, where fewer than 2% of pits produce even a single sherd of this date (Lewis Forthcoming 2014a). Thus although small, this sherd can be used to infer, albeit tentatively, the likelihood of settlement in the vicinity

at this time. Three pits produced late Anglo-Saxon pottery, with MAN/13/03 and MAN/13/11 producing 10 sherds, easily enough to infer the presence of settlement in the vicinity. MAN/13/02 produced just a single sherd, which may indicate that this settlement did not extend too far north of MAN/13/03. All three pits of these pits were near the present parish church, and indicate that there was a settlement of some sort, perhaps a small hamlet, present here in the late Anglo-Saxon period, probably clustered around a church on or close to the present building.

The late Anglo-Saxon settlement around the church does not seem to have expanded to any great extent in the high medieval period, with just three pits in this area in 2013 producing a total of just 15 sherds. There is some evidence to suggest that activity may have intensified in the wider landscape, with Parsonage Farm and Uppend both producing pottery of this date for the first time, but both cases only in small quantities. Three sherds from Parsonage Farm may be just enough to reasonably infer settlement in the vicinity, but the single sherd from Uppend would usually be regarded as more likely to derive from manuring of arable fields. None of the outlying sites produced any material of late medieval date, with the number of sherds found in pits around the church also lower than previously. Parsonage Farm, Uppend and Saucemeres all produced pottery of post-medieval date, but in small numbers with Uppend the only site to produce more than five sherds of this date. Many of this pits around the church produced post-medieval pottery, with MAN/13/5 and MAN/13/11 both producing a dozen or so sherds, overall suggesting that settlement here was intensifying while settlement in the wider landscape was also expanding.

Writtle, Essex (NGR TL 675065)

A further 10 test pits were excavated in Writtle in 2013, bringing the total so far to 46 (fig 11). Attention was focussed on filling gaps in the area around the greens in the centre of the present village. No pottery predating the 12th century was found in any of the pits excavated in 2013. The distribution of the high medieval material, combined with the finds from earlier years, confirms that settlement was arranged around both greens, although with some gaps and no sign to date of any activity south-east of Writtle Green. Two outlying sites in areas of modern housing, around WRI/13/8 and WRI/13/09-10 also both produced high medieval pottery in sufficient volume to infer habitation in the immediate vicinity, suggesting that settlement at this time was not solely sited around the greens. There is no evidence for any significant level of decline in pottery yields in the later medieval period, and nearly all sites produce large amounts of post-medieval pottery, showing the settlement to be thriving at this time.

Hampshire

North Warnborough (NGR SU 731515)

North Warnborough is located in north Hampshire c. 12km east of Basingstoke and c. 9km west of Fleet. The village today is essentially linear in form, extending to about 1km along a gently curving south-west-north-east orientated street (the southern extent named North Warnborough Street and the northern extent Bridge Road). It lies c. 0.5km east of the medieval castle of Odiham and 1km west of the larger settlement of Odiham. Further settlement today extends either side of Dunleys hill which leads south-east to Odiham. Compared to the extensively researched history of the royal holding of Odiham with its castle and market, much less is known about north Warnborough, although the name is recorded in late Anglo-Saxon charters (Ekwall 1936, 475) with early forms of the name indicating it derives from the nearby river, rather than any fortified site (Ekwall 1936, 475). Warnborough was a separate estate in Domesday Book (Williams and Martin (eds) 2003, 116), but now lies in the parish of Odiham, although had a chapel of ease (now destroyed) in the 16th century (Page 1911, 87-98). The First Edition of the Ordnance Survey 6" to one mile map shows the late 19th century settlement to be smaller than it is today and almost exclusively arranged along North Warnborough St and Bridge Road. There are several inns as well as a mill at the northern end of Bridge Road. The area either side of Dunleys Hill is entirely occupied by fields, with the exception of a short row of half a dozen dwellings north of the road near Chapel House, sited c. 200m east of the main settlement.

11 test pits were excavated in North Warnborough in 2013 (fig 12). The only closely datable material earlier than c. 1100 AD was a single sherd of Romano-British pottery, found in NWA/13/4, near the present canal at Swan Bridge. Although of a reasonable size (10g), the presence of just one sherd is not enough to confidently infer settlement in the vicinity, and it is notable that it came from less than 30cm below the surface in deposits which overlay others with later material of medieval, post-medieval and modern date, so may be a secondary deposit, perhaps associated with digging the canal. No pottery of Anglo-Saxon date was recovered from any of the 2013 pits, but seven of them produced material of high medieval date. Small single sherds only were recovered from three of these (NWA/13/2, 3 and 5), unlikely to indicate settlement in the immediate vicinity, although possibly indicative of arable manuring, an explanation that certainly seems plausible for NWA/13/2 and 3, west of the main village street. NWA/13/11 produced two sherds of this date, again from disturbed deposits near the canal containing later material. On balance, it seems likely

that these too are likely to relate to agricultural rather than settlement activity. Test pits NWA/13/04, /06 and /07, however, produced large amounts of pottery which does seem likely to indicate settlement in the immediate vicinity. These sites are all located along Bridge Road as it runs north to become Hook Road, suggesting that this part of North Warnborough was inhabited at this time. Several pits produce Surrey whitewares, perhaps hinting at householders with the resources to acquire somewhat better-than-average pottery.

The late medieval period is in stark contrast, as only one pit (NWA/13/06) produced any pottery of this date, and here just a single small (5g) sherd was found. Certainly, on present evidence, the north end of the village suffered very badly. If the pits excavated in 2013 are typical of the rest of North Warnborough, the settlement would appear to have been almost entirely deserted in the period after the 14th century. The community appears to have recovered in the post-medieval period, as pottery of this date is present in all but one (NWA/13/09) of the excavated pits.

Hertfordshire

Great Amwell, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 372125)

Great Amwell is located in south Hertfordshire approximately 5km east of Hertford and 10km north-west of Harlow. The settlement is mostly sited on a low hill (50-65m OD) in the valley of the River Lea which flows south from Great Amwell through London to join the Thames at Blackwall. Great Amwell today is a small and mostly secluded settlement east of the A1170 through-road linking Ware and Hoddesdon., with housing arranged along two narrow lanes which cross c. 150m south-west of the church, supplemented by two small modern estates mostly comprising large detached houses. The earliest reference to Amwell is in Domesday Book (Ekwall 1936, 9) when a single holding is recorded under this name as a *berewick* of the manor of Hatfield (Williams and Martin 2003, 970). Despite this apparently minor status, the settlement has a parish church of Norman date (HHER 4362). In the 17th century, the New River was created to take fresh water to London, running c.50m east of the church. The First Edition of the Ordnance Survey 6" to one mile map shows the late 19th century settlement to be smaller than it is today, comprising barely 20 houses, mostly large detached complexes, dispersed along a network of lanes along the wooded east-facing valley side, with a school and an inn along the main (A1170) road. Amwellbury is a separate large farm c. 1km north-west of the church.

11 test pits were excavated at Great Amwell in 2013 (fig 13). Very little was found, with the exception of

GAM/13/7, which contained pottery of late Iron Age, Late Anglo-Saxon and medieval dates. The Iron Age pottery, although comprising just a single sherd, is sufficiently unusual to be noteworthy as possibly indicative of intensive activity nearby. The single sherd of St Neots Ware from this pit is also ambiguous, as although this not normally be considered enough to indicate settlement in the vicinity, pottery of this date has been found to be generally uncommon in test pits in Essex and south Hertfordshire, so it is considered more interesting that might normally be expected. In contrast, the fourteen sherds of high medieval pottery from this same pit are certainly sufficient to infer contemporary settlement in the immediate vicinity, although these provide the only evidence for settlement of this date found in 2013 in Great Amwell. The recovery of two sherds of late medieval pottery from the same pit hints at the possibility that activity continued into the 14th – 16th century, but may indicate that the site was abandoned thereafter as no post-medieval material was recovered and only three small sherds of 19th – 20th century pottery. The only other pit excavated in Great Amwell in 2013 which produced medieval material was GAM/13/08, adjacent to the church, which yielded a single small (2g) sherd of late medieval transitional ware.

Although only a small number of pits have been excavated and the evidence from these is very limited, it currently does seem as if there was a settlement, perhaps very small, east of Catherly lane south of the church. Very little post-medieval material was recovered, with the creation of the New River in the 17th century seemingly having little or no impact on the settlement.

Norfolk

Acle, Norfolk (NGR TG 405105)

Nine pits were excavated at Acle in 2013, bringing the total to 35 (fig 14). ACL/13/06 and ACL/13/09 both produced Romano-British material in an area known to be near settlement of this date, but more unexpectedly, so did ACL/13/08, located in Damgate nearly 1km to the south which must relate to a separate site. As in previous years, no material of early or middle Anglo-Saxon date was found, but ACL/13/3 did produce several sherds of Thetford ware from the same area in the central 'triangle' in the north of the present village, alongside Old Road. ACL/13/2 and ACL/13/3 produced four and three sherds respectively of high medieval pottery, which might indicate settlement in the vicinity, although not very convincingly so, with ACL/13/7 and ACL/13/8 producing even smaller amounts of this material. As in earlier years, very little late medieval pottery was found.

Binham, Norfolk (NGR TF 981396)

13 test pits were excavated in Binham in 2013 bringing the total number of pits excavated here to sixty (fig 15). In the south of the present village, BIN/13/08 produced a remarkable total of eight sherds of Bronze Age pottery, along with worked and fire-cracked flint, clearly indicating intensive activity in the vicinity. This site was c. 500m away from other test pits where material of the same date was found in BIN/13/12 and in earlier years, indicating the presence of two separate Bronze Age sites. Single sherds of Romano-British pottery at BIN/13/04 and BIN/13/10 are unlikely to indicate intensive activity, but four sherds at BIN/13/11 may do so, and BIN/13/12 and BIN/13/13 both produced more than a dozen sherds of this date, clearly indicating settlement nearby, reinforcing evidence from earlier test pitting for likely settlement in the area west of the present village hall.

Most of the 2013 pits produced pottery of high medieval date, although this was notably absent from BIN/13/03, /04, /05 and /12, while BIN/13/01, /06, /07, /10 and /11 produced very little. These sites are all on the south-western margins of the present settlement. In contrast, BIN/13/02, /08 and /09 all produced large amounts of high medieval pottery. Overall, it is notable that there is very little overlap between the sites producing Romano-British and medieval material. As in previous years, very little late medieval pottery was found, with BIN/13/02 the only one to produce any material of this date, this amounting to just two small sherds together weighing 7g. This reinforces the picture evident from previous test pit excavations indicating that Binham suffered severe late medieval contraction.

Garboldisham, Norfolk (NGR TM 005815)

11 test pits were excavated in Garboldisham in 2013, adding to those completed in previous years and bringing the total to 34 (fig 16). Pits GAR/13/01-07 filled gaps in areas previously explored in the village north and south of the A1066 and on Garboldisham Common, while pits GAR/13/08 and GAR/13/09 investigated new locations at Ling Farm and Garboldisham Manor and GAR/13/10 and GAR/13/11 returned to Hall Farm where a test pit in 2012 encountered 19th century structures which prevented it from extending to any great depth (Lewis 2013).

GAR/13/11 produced a single tiny (1g) sherd of Bronze Age pottery. While small, this material is in general sufficiently uncommon for the find to be noteworthy. The same pit also produced two sherds of Romano-British pottery, one quite large (11g),

possibly indicative of settlement in the vicinity. At Ling Farm (CRO/13/08) the recovery of three sherds hinted at the possible presence of settlement nearby. Single sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from pits CRO/13/04 and CRO/13/07, suggesting low-intensity activity, possibly manuring, at this time in the area of the present village, perhaps indicating that the settlement indicated by previous discoveries of larger number of sherds did not extend very far. The overall pattern of the Roman material at Garboldisham, although relatively sparse, does hint at a widespread pattern of largely dispersed settlement occupying some of the same places in the landscape as today's settlements.

No Anglo-Saxon pottery was found in 2013, and very little of medieval date, with GAR/13/03 and CRO/13/06 producing just a single sherd each and GAR/13/08 and GAR/13/11 three and two sherds respectively. This evidence, sparse as it clearly is, does hint at activity of some sort on the sites of later outlying elements of the settlement pattern at Ling Farm and Hall Farm. The latter (GAR/13/11) was the only site in 2013 to produce any later medieval material, a single sherd of late medieval transitional ware.

Gaywood, Norfolk (NGR XX 000000)

Eleven test pits were excavated in Gaywood in 2013, adding to those completed in 2010 and 2011 and bringing the total to thirty-nine. Four pits produced Romano-British pottery, with single large sherds found in GAY/13/01 and GAY/13/02 (25g and 47g respectively), a smaller sherd in GAY/13/06 and two sherds in GAY/13/10, suggesting activity of some sort along the eastern bank of the river and possibly non-intensive use such as arable in the present area of Jermyn Road (GAY/13/01). As in previous years, several pits produced Ipswich Ware, found in GAY/13/03, GAY/13/04, GAY/13/05, GAY/13/06 and GAY/13/11, reinforcing the evidence for intensive use of the eastern bank of the river in the period between c. 720 – 850AD. Less later Anglo-Saxon material was recovered than in previous years, with GAY/13/05 the only one to produce as much as a single small (2g) sherd. Pottery dating to the later 11th – mid 14th centuries was found widely, in all pits bar GAY/13/05, GAY/13/06, GAY/13/08 and GAY/13/09, although only in GAY/13/02-04 was this found in quantities likely to indicate settlement in the vicinity, suggesting that the focus of activity had moved south and a little away from the river since the middle Anglo-Saxon period to the area along the present Wootton Road. GAY/13/03 produced eight sherds of late medieval pottery, suggesting that habitation continued here after the later 14th century, the only site in 2013 where this

was apparent, reinforcing the impression gained in previous years of severe late medieval contraction.

Suffolk

Little Waldingfield, Suffolk (NGR TL 924451)

The village of Little Waldingfield is situated in south-west Suffolk on the B115 between Sudbury (c.6km to the south-west) and Monks Eleigh (c.5km to the north-east) just 4km south of Lavenham. Little Waldingfield is today arranged as a linear (mostly double row) settlement extending for c. 800m along The Street (B1115) equidistant either side of a T-junction with Church Road, along which a double row of housing extends for c. 300m. The small village has a very rural feel and is surrounded by farmland. The parish of Little Waldingfield also includes the smaller hamlet of Humble Green, which lies c. 0.5km to the north-east, also arranged along the B1115. In the later 19th century, the first edition 6" to 1 mile map shows Little Waldingfield to be smaller than today, with settlement along The Street extending to less than 200m and clearly separated by more than 150m of fields from Park Farm to the south and Waldingfield Hall and Maltings Farm to the north. Settlement along Church Street was however much as it is today. The place name is recorded in the Domesday Book as *Walingafella*, as a combined entry for Great and Little Waldingfield (Williams and Martin 2003).

The excavation of five test pits in Little Waldingfield (fig 18) was funded in 2013 as part of the Managing a Masterpiece HLF programme for local middle school pupils to take part in. The small number of excavated test pits (and the shallow depth to which most were excavated) limits the inferences which can be made about the settlement and development of the village, although a few points of interest can nonetheless be noted. Limited prehistoric activity was identified from the test pits, all in the form of un-retouched flakes, which appear to date to the later Neolithic to the later Bronze Age, suggesting one or more episodes of activity of some sort in the area in the prehistoric period. No material of Roman or early Anglo-Saxon date was recovered, but two produced Thetford Ware. Neither yielded more than a single sherd, which may indicate low-intensity use such as arable, perhaps associated with rather than settlement in the vicinity.

Four pits produced pottery of high medieval date, although pits LWA/13/04 and LWA/13/05 both only produced two sherds, and are relatively unlikely to indicate settlement in the immediate vicinity. The pottery data do clearly suggest that settlement was present in the vicinity of test pit two, and tentatively indicates that it might have extended further around

the T-junction in the centre of the village and close to the church.

Three pits produced pottery of late medieval date, including LWA/13/02 which produced a very large number of sherds (47), clearly indicative of settlement in the immediate vicinity. All three pits which produced late medieval pottery (LWA/13/01, LWA/13/02 and LWA/13/05) are clustered tightly together around the junction between Church Road and The Street, suggesting that settlement at this time was concentrated in this area, and may not have suffered any great degree of late medieval contraction. Large numbers of post-medieval sherds, from the same pits indicate that these parts of the community continued to do well at this time.

Long Melford, Suffolk (NGR TL 865455)

Ten test pits were excavated in Long Melford by HEFA students in 2013 (fig 19), adding to those completed in 2011 as part of the BBC television series *Great British Story* (Lewis 2012, 54-5), bringing the total to forty-seven. With the exception of LME/13/10, excavated by local residents on the edge of the football pitch, all the 2013 pits were sited in the northern part of the present village, an area less-intensively explored in 2011.

A small (2g) sherd of Bronze Age pottery was found in LME/13/01, hinting at activity of some sort in this area beyond the margins of the present settlement. Otherwise the earliest material found dated to the Roman period. A single small sherd in LME/13/02 is unlikely to indicate settlement in the vicinity, but more than 80 sherds were found in LME/13/10, associated with a cobbled surface and possible post holes, clearly indicating a structure and intensive activity presumed to relate to settlement on this site. This is in the same central part of the present village of Long Melford which produced large amounts of Romano-British material in 2011.

Given the paucity of Anglo-Saxon material found in the 2011 pits, the most notable discovery in 2013 was a total of eleven sherds of Thetford Ware from LME/13/07, which was all the more striking for being found in association with a post-hole, providing convincing evidence for settlement on the edge of the area now forming part of the large green south of the parish church. As this is more than 1km north of three sites which produced smaller amounts of the same material in 2011, it seems clear that the very long present village overlies two quite separate nodes of late Anglo-Saxon settlement. The site on the green does not however appear to have continued in use into the post-Conquest era, as the only later pottery found were two tiny sherds (together totalling 3g) of 19th – 20th century date. In general, evidence for high medieval activity was sparse in the pits

excavated in 2013, as pits LME/13/03 and LME/13/06 were the only ones to produce any material of this date, each producing just a single sherd of 12th – 14th century date. Both pits also produced single sherd of late medieval pottery, perhaps suggesting that whatever low level of high medieval activity is indicated did not decline significantly in the 14th – 16th centuries. Very little post-medieval material was found either, reflecting the siting of many of the 2013 pits on the margins of the existing settlement.

Walberswick, Suffolk (NGR TM 490747)

Walberswick is a coastal village located in east Suffolk approximately 2km south-west of Southwold and 12km west of Halesworth, south of the River Blyth where it empties into the North Sea. The settlement today lies on low land between 0m and 10m OD south of an area of marsh and common land between the present village and the river. The settlement is arranged as an 1200m-long east-west orientated linear row along The Street which turns north at its eastern end to continue as Ferry Road. Additional housing is present along many streets which extend either side of this main axis. The church lies towards the western end of the present village, near a fork in the road and c. 200 before the settlement ends. The first edition of the 6" to 1 mile OS map shows the settlement in the later 19th century to have terminated nearer the church and to have been more intermittent along The Street, with very little housing present either side of this. Church Lane, Patners Lane, Stock Lane and Leveretts Lane are shown to be present but are entirely devoid of housing. Walberswick is not recorded in Domesday Book and when the name is first recorded in 1199 (Ekwall 1936, 468) it may be presumed to refer to a small farming hamlet. This minor status appears to be reflected again in 1334 when it was taxed jointly with Blythburgh (Glasscock 1975, 289). The earliest fabric of the existing church at Walberswick dates to the 15th century but this replaced an earlier building on the same site (SHER WLB 014). An even earlier church is thought to have lain on a different site, south of the present village on Oldtown Marshes, where pottery found during field-walking is presumed also to indicate the site of the earliest settlement (SHER WLB 010).

Nine test pits were excavated at Walberswick by HEFA students in 2013, with sites widely distributed throughout the existing settlement (fig 20). A significant amount (16 sherds) of Romano-British pottery was found in WAL/13/06, on the southern margins of the present settlement at Elfinston Corner, well beyond the limit of the 19th century settlement but close to the area which has produced Roman as well as medieval material during field-walking. None of the other pits produced any material of this

date, possibly indicating that the Romano-British settlement did not extend far under the area occupied by the present settlement.

Just one site produced any material possibly pre-dating the Norman period, and although this amounted to just a single small sherd it was interesting to note that it came from WAL/13/02, along Leverett's Lane, perhaps indicating that this area, presumed to be marshy grazing may have seen more intensive use at this time. All but one (WAL/13/03) of the pits produced 12th – 14th century pottery, with five of these (WAL/13/01-02 and WAL/13/05-07) producing this in quantities strongly suggestive of settlement in the immediate vicinity, at the eastern end of the present settlement and south-east of the church. This was particularly notable because the presence of medieval pottery and building debris on the Oldtown Marshes had suggested that the present settlement site might be the results of late medieval relocation and not predate the 15th century. The test pit data clearly indicates that this is not the case and that intensive activity was occurring across much of the existing settlement, including Leverett's Lane.

Unusually, a number of the pits produced more late medieval material than high, notably WAL/13/03-04 and WAL/13/08. The latter was the closest site to the church, and produced just a single small (2g) sherd 12th–14th century pottery but five sherds of later 14th–16th century material. Overall, while the volume of later medieval pottery from Walberswick is less than for the high medieval period, there is no dramatic decline, and little sign of any reduction in the number of sites producing material at this date.

Conclusion

2013 was a productive year in terms of the number of pits excavated and the number of new settlements drawn into the test pit excavation programme. In some respects it was unusual, with much more prehistoric pottery found than in previous years (although the total is still very small) and in several settlements there was very little medieval material found. By the end of 2013, the total number of test pits excavated totalled 1,499. As the number of sites investigated and the volume of material has slowly grown over the years, it has been possible to see some patterns emerging which are now beginning to be explored in more detail than is possible here (but see Lewis forthcoming 2014a) and will be analysed further in the future. The social impact of the excavations has continued to be felt widely, with the benefit to those such as teenagers taking part in HEFA excavations clearly evidenced by feedback data now extending over nine years (Lewis Forthcoming 2014b).

Archive reports have been prepared for each test pit excavated in each settlement and are held by ACA at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge. Details of the HEFA 2013 test pit sites and the pottery reports for each of the sites investigated have been sent to county heritage curators and are available to view at <http://www.access.arch.cam.ac.uk/reports>. Completed unpublished excavation reports (available for 2013 excavations in Little Waldingfield, Meldreth, Nayland, Toft, Shillington and West Wickham) can be downloaded from the ACA website.

Test pit excavation in CORS settlements in the eastern region will continue in 2014, with the HEFA programme funded from the University of Cambridge Widening Participation project fund. It is hoped that opportunities for community test pit excavation programmes will also continue to arise. The results of test pit excavations carried out in 2014 as part of the University of Cambridge CORS project will be reported in the next volume of Medieval Settlement Research.

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