

# WRENINGHAM VILLAGE ARCHAEOLOGICAL TEST-PITTING 2018

## INTERIM REPORT

### Summary

During 2018 a total of eight archaeological test-pits were excavated by volunteers within the parish of Wreningham, South Norfolk.

Evidence was uncovered of medieval occupation at the east end of the north side of Wymondham Road, possibly as part of a common-edge settlement. In addition, test-pits excavated on the northern valley side of the tributary of the Tas forming the southern boundary of the parish uncovered considerable evidence of prehistoric occupation.

It is hoped that future test-pits, hopefully located more widely within the parish, in conjunction with the published results of recent archaeological excavations on Church Road, will extend our knowledge of the historical development of our parish.

### Background

The following information comes from the parish survey of Wreningham in the Norfolk Heritage Explorer website (<http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/parishes>) written by Ruth Fillery-Travis in 2007.

*‘Wreningham is a small parish situated in the South Norfolk Local Government District. It has an area of some 621 hectares, and contains the medieval parishes of Little Wreningham and Nelonde. The name ‘Wreningham’ may derive from the Old English words of homestead of wrenna’s people.*

*The earliest objects to be recovered from the parish are three Neolithic axeheads (NHER [9958](#), [9959](#) and [31281](#)), as well as a Neolithic flint sickle blade (NHER [9957](#)). No prehistoric monuments have been recorded, but the tip of a Bronze Age spear (NHER [28495](#)) and a Late Bronze Age socketed axehead fragment (NHER [29341](#)) have been discovered. In addition, an Iron Age Icenian gold coin (NHER [30210](#)) has also be found, along with a possible Iron Age domed stud decorated with triquetra (NHER [29310](#)), one other coin (NHER [30885](#)) and an interesting object which may be a pendant from a brooch (NHER [31281](#)).*

*Extensive metal detecting in this parish has resulted in a large number of objects being recovered. Many of these originated in the Roman period, with objects from this period recovered from twenty-eight separate sites across the parish. Coins make up a large number of these, having been found at twenty-one of these sites, and include coins from the first (NHER [9961](#)), second (NHER [30105](#)) and third (NHER [9961](#)) centuries. Particularly interesting is a hoard (NHER [31466](#)) of 186 Roman silver denarii recovered with fragments of a pottery vessel. These coins were minted between 32/31 BC and AD 180.*

*Brooches have also been a common find, recovered from fifteen sites in the parish and including Colchester (NHER [31416](#), [28494](#) and [30208](#)) headstud (NHER [31286](#) and [30885](#)) dolphin (NHER [28495](#)) disc (NHER [28622](#)) Aesica (NHER [28868](#)) and Hod Hill (NHER [31281](#)) types. Other*

objects of interest include a military buckle (NHER [28494](#)), bracelet fragment (NHER [29310](#)) and finger ring fragments (NHER [30885](#)).

A large number of Saxon objects have also been recovered. These include Early Saxon objects from eleven separate sites in the parish, from which a variety of interesting pieces have been found. Of particular note are a copper alloy bowl with a textile imprint (NHER [28495](#)), a silver gilded escutcheon (NHER [30202](#)) formed of two spirals with addorsed birds' heads in the centre and a repousse buckle plate (NHER [31281](#)). Brooches have also been a common find (NHER [30201](#), [30885](#) and [35712](#)), including cruciform, supporting arm (NHER [32035](#)), and small-long (NHER [28622](#)) types.

Middle Saxon objects have also been recovered from seven sites, and include objects such as a possible copper alloy biconical pin head and stylised animal-head strap end terminal (NHER [28495](#)) and a strap end which features an animal head terminal and silver wire inlay (NHER [30201](#)). A Middle Saxon strap end with possible enamel or niello (NHER [31284](#)) is also of interest, as well as a 9th century square mount with well-preserved gilding and silvering, which is thought to have been made in northern France (NHER [35362](#)).

Other Late Saxon finds include a finger ring and animal head fitting (NHER [28494](#)), another finger ring and a number of disc brooches, including one Middle to Late Saxon nummular disc brooch depicting a profile head with beard (NHER [28622](#)). At least two pieces in the Ringerike style have also been discovered, one of which was a mount (NHER [28868](#)) and the other of which was a harness cheekpiece (NHER [29307](#)). Also of interest is a lovely Late Saxon box mount depicting an animal with a raised head and front paw (NHER [30209](#)).

It should also be noted that Wreningham is listed in the Domesday Book of 1086, and it is not perhaps surprising that the parish also had a church. Today the modern parish contains three medieval parishes, those of Little Wreningham, Great Wreningham and Nelonde. All three are thought to have had a church, though today only All Saints' Church (NHER [9996](#)) survives. This was the church originally associated with Great Wreningham, although it became the parish church for all three settlements in 1414 when the parishes were united.

Today All Saints' is almost entirely Perpendicular in style and date, though the collapse of the upper stages of the west tower precipitated rebuilding and restoration across the building in 1853. The earliest surviving work in the church is the lower stage of the tower, which dates to the 13th century. However a niche in the west face contains a stone monster which may predate this. Whether this is the church mentioned in the Domesday Book, or even the site of that Late Saxon church, is unknown.

The settlements of Little Wreningham (NHER [9942](#)) and Nelonde (NHER [14458](#)) no longer survive, and although we know their approximate location no surface archaeological features survive to show us their exact positions. A number of other medieval sites are known, and this includes two possible (NHER [9991](#)) or destroyed (NHER [9952](#)) moated enclosures that might have been associated with high-status dwellings or settlement. Only one secular medieval building survives, and this is High Common Cottage (NHER [18441](#)), which is thought to have been built at the very end of the medieval period, as an open hall house. Three original queen post trusses in the roof survive, and the screens passage has western service doors.

A large number of medieval objects have also been recovered from across the parish. This comprises objects such as coins (NHER [28622](#), [29309](#) and [30208](#)), pottery sherds (NHER [35044](#) and [28494](#)) and buckles (NHER [30212](#), [30391](#) and [31282](#)), as well as personal items such as seal matrices

(NHER [21168](#), [30201](#) and [35712](#)), strap fittings (NHER [28495](#), [29310](#) and [30209](#)) and keys (NHER [28868](#), [30207](#) and [30885](#)).

Objects of particular note include a lovely 13th century gilded buckle plate with a low relief mythological bird (NHER [28494](#)), a silver bell (NHER [29386](#)), a gilded casket mount (NHER [30206](#)), a gilded buckle plate (NHER [30263](#)), and a lead pilgrim's ampulla from Walsingham (NHER [31284](#)). Similar post medieval objects have also been found, with those of interest including a 19th century spoon bowl (NHER [30391](#)), and a 17th century hemispherical button (NHER [31286](#)).

There are also a number of buildings of interest from the post medieval period, such as The Poplars (NHER [12314](#)), a timber-framed house dated to 1586 with crowstepped brick gable ends and octagonal chimneys. Of a similar date is High House (NHER [19482](#)), which is a brick L-shaped building with ovolo mullioned windows with transoms and stuccoed reveals.

A little later in date is the 17th century Fir Grove (NHER [13920](#)), which is also timber-framed and has thatched and plain tiled roofs (NHER [13920](#)), as well as a 19th century porch with crow-stepped gable. Also of note is the late 17th century timber-framed and thatched Glastonbury Cottage (NHER [34433](#)), the single storey 17th century timber-framed and thatched Old Homestead (NHER [34434](#)), and Willy's Croft (NHER [36180](#)), which also dates to the 17th century and is partially timber-framed with a thatched roof.

Other sites of interest include an Admiralty semaphore telegraph station (NHER [14979](#)), which was present 'on high ground near church' and was part of the London to Great Yarmouth line. The site of a post medieval post mill is also recorded (NHER [15391](#)), and the Wymondham to Fornsett Railway Line (NHER [13580](#)) is also recorded. This was opened in 1881 to allow trains to reach the north coast without entering Norwich, but had a short operating lifespan. It closed in 1939 to passengers and in 1951 to goods trains, with only a stub of track surviving as sidings.

World War Two also left its mark on the parish, but today the only surviving remnant is a pillbox or air raid shelter (NHER [20985](#)). It is a rectangular brick building with a shielded entrance and concrete slab roof, and was probably originally connected with Hethel airfield to the north.'

Wreningham was subject to an enclosure act in 1779 which governed the enclosure of five commons throughout the parish. Although the act did not have an accompanying map, the text of act allows the location of the commons to be reconstructed (information to be included in the final report).

Recent commercial archaeological investigations within the parish have produced evidence of a Roman farmstead at the Bird in Hand public house on the corner of Church Street and the B1113 and of Middle Saxon to medieval occupation to the west of the parish church on Church Street.

## Methodology

The test-pits we excavated according to the Access Cambridgeshire Archaeology Field Academy Handbook (Digging and Archaeological Test Pit: A Step-by-Step Guide', 2011, University of Cambridge). Most of the test-pits were excavated on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2018, with ENF144938 dug in December 2018 and ENF147191 dug on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018.

All the test-pits were located by Sandrine Whitmore of Survey Solutions using a Total Station Theodolite and a GPS.

## **Results**

A total of seven 1x1m test pits were excavated in the village and its surroundings. The results and interpretation are given below.


### **ENF144931: Pear Tree Farmhouse, Wymondham Road:**

Pear Tree Farmhouse is located on the north side of the Wymondham Road and is in origin a probable 17<sup>th</sup> century, three-celled, timber-framed farm house, of a type common in South Norfolk.

The 1730 estate map (Norfolk Records Office HNR 15/5) shows common land to the south of Wymondham Road, suggesting that Pear Tree Farm may have formed part of a 'common-edge' settlement. However, the Wreningham Enclosure Act of 1779 (NRO C/Sce 1/1) suggests that by that date there was no common there.

Although the only archaeological feature encountered within the test-pit was a post-medieval or modern probable posthole, the presence of a layer of redeposited natural clay as well as 15 sherds (some quite large and unabraded) of medieval pottery.

It appears certain that there was a medieval predecessor to Pear Tree Farmhouse on this site.

| ENF144931  |           | Pear Tree Farmhouse, Wymondham Road                      |               |
|--|-----------|--|---------------|
|  |           | <b>Centre point:</b>                                     |               |
|  |           | 615584 298703  |               |
|  |           | <b>Height at ground level:</b>                           |               |
|  |           | 40.95m OD  |               |
|  | Thickness | Description  | Finds         |
| <b>Spit 1</b>  | 0.04m     | Turf line  | Modern        |
| <b>Spit 2</b>  | 0.15m     | Topsoil. Dark brown sandy clay                           | Post-medieval |
| <b>Spit 3</b>  | 0.2m      | Subsoil. Dark brown sandy clay                           | Post-medieval |
| <b>Spit 4</b>  | 0.35m     | Mix of soil and redeposited natural yellow chalky clay   | Post-medieval |
| <b>Spit 5</b>  | 0.35m     | Subsoil. Mid brown sandy clay                            | Post-medieval |
| <b>Posthole 6</b>  | 0.4m      | Modern probable posthole in southeast corner of test-pit | Post-medieval |

| Context | Material    | Qty | Wt | Period  | Notes |
|---------|-------------|-----|----|---------|-------|
| 1       | Animal bone | 1   | 6g | Unknown |       |
| 1       | Burnt flint | 1   | 5g | Unknown |       |


|   |                           |    |     |                |   |
|---|---------------------------|----|-----|----------------|---|
| 1 | Ceramic building material | 4  | 4g  | Post-medieval  | 2 x roof tile frags; 2 x brick tiny frags.        |
| 1 | Glass                     | 3  | 4g  | Post-medieval  | 1 x clear; 1 x dark green; 1 x pinkish            |
| 1 | Iron                      | 1  | 4g  | Modern         | Screw   |
| 1 | Pottery                   | 2  | 10g | Post-medieval  | 1 x stoneware; 1 x iron glazed                    |
| 1 | Slate                     | 1  | 1g  | Post-medieval  | shard   |
| 2 | Animal bone               | 3  | 5g  | Unknown        |   |
| 2 | Burnt flint               | 1  | 9g  | Unknown        |   |
| 2 | Ceramic building material | 8  | 83g | Post-medieval  | 4x brick frags; 4x roof tile frags                |
| 2 | Glass                     | 2  | 8g  | Post-medieval  | 1x green bottle frag; clear glass ?bottle frag    |
| 2 | Iron                      | 3  | 29g | Unknown        | Nails   |
| 2 | Pottery                   | 9  | 63g | Post-medieval  | 2x GRE; 1x speckled; 3x white ware                |
| 2 | Pottery                   | 2  | 18g | Med./Post-Med. | LMT   |
| 2 | Pottery                   | 4  | 17g | Medieval       | 1x Grimston                                       |
| 2 | Pumice                    | 2  | 4g  | Unknown        |   |
| 3 | Animal bone               | 3  | 24g | Unknown        | large mammal frags                                |
| 3 | Ceramic building material | 4  | 10g | Post-medieval  | brick frags                                       |
| 3 | Iron                      | 1  | 5g  | Unknown        | Nail; H36   |
| 3 | Pottery                   | 2  | 17g | Post-medieval  | 1x GRE; 1x EPM                                    |
| 3 | Pottery                   | 1  | 4g  | Medieval       |   |
| 3 | Pumice                    | 2  | 1g  | Unknown        |   |
| 4 | Burnt flint               | 3  | 52g | Unknown        |   |
| 4 | Ceramic building material | 4  | 6g  | Post-medieval  | tiny frags  |
| 4 | Pottery                   | 3  | 9g  | Medieval       |   |
| 4 | Pottery                   | 1  | 6g  | Post-medieval  | ?flower pot                                       |
| 5 | Animal bone               | 7  | 11g | Unknown        | fragments of large mammal?                        |
| 5 | Burnt flint               | 4  | 36g | Unknown        |   |
| 5 | Ceramic building material | 14 | 44g | Post-medieval  | fragments   |
| 5 | Iron                      | 1  | 2g  | Modern         | Nails; H64  |
| 5 | Pottery                   | 3  | 4g  | Post-medieval  | 1x stoneware; 1xGRE; 1x lead-glazed ware (yellow) |
| 5 | Pottery                   | 5  | 71g | Medieval       |   |
| 6 | Burnt flint               | 1  | 13g | Unknown        |   |
| 6 | Ceramic building material | 1  | 9g  | Post-medieval  | ?floor tile frag                                  |



### **ENF144933: Cherrytrees, Ashwellthorpe Road:**

Cherrytrees appears from the outside to be a late 19<sup>th</sup> century, although the adjoining house to the south (The Brambles) may be early 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. It is a brick-built house with a symmetrical facade. Although this house is shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map (c.1885), only the adjoining house (The Brambles) is shown on the Tithe map (c. 1840). Cherrytrees is located in the valley bottom with Low Green located on the east side of the Ashwellthorpe Road and Wreningham Green shown on the 1731-6 maps to the west. It is likely that early in the 18<sup>th</sup> century this area was common.

Natural geology was not encountered in this test-pit, as it wasn't in any of the valley bottom test pits (ENF144935 and ENF144936). The upper two spits were certainly topsoil and yielded modern and post-medieval artefacts. However, also present was a single Prehistoric flint waste-flake. The lower spit reached a clayey subsoil which exhibited an absence of modern material, but no material certainly earlier than the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

| ENF144933   |           | Cherrytrees, Ashwellthorpe Road                      |               |
|---|-----------|--|---------------|
|  |           | <b>Centre point:</b>                                 |               |
|   |           |  | 615647 298491 |
|   |           | <b>Height at ground level:</b>                       |               |
|   |           |  | 39.59m OD     |
|   | Thickness | Description  | Finds         |
| <b>Spit 1</b>   | 0.1m      | Dark brown soil with rare flints                     | Modern        |
| <b>Spit 2</b>   | 0.19m     | Dark brown soil with rare flints and charcoal        | Modern        |
| <b>Spit 3</b>   | 0.29m     | Dark brown clayey soil with rare flints and charcoal | Post-medieval |
| <b>Natural geology</b>  |           | Not reached  |               |

| Context | Material                  | Qty | Wt     | Period        | Notes                          |
|---------|---------------------------|-----|--------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| 1       | Ceramic building material | 1   | 1,285g | Post-medieval | large piece of brick; W105 T63 |
| 1       | Ceramic building material | 18  | 102g   | Post-medieval | roof tile & brick frags        |
| 1       | Ceramic building material | 6   | 28g    | Modern        | brick frags                    |
| 1       | Glass                     | 1   | 1g     | Post-medieval | clear bottle glass             |

|   |                           |    |     |                |   |
|---|---------------------------|----|-----|----------------|---|
| 1 | Mortar                    | 1  | 8g  | Modern         | render  |
| 1 | Pottery                   | 2  | 5g  | Post-medieval  | cream & brown glazed                                    |
| 1 | Worked flint              | 1  | 2g  | Prehistoric    | primary flake   |
| 1 | Burnt flint               | 1  | 7g  | Unknown        |   |
| 1 | Ceramic building material | 1  | 8g  | Post-medieval  | brick frags   |
| 1 | Ceramic building material | 1  | 2g  | Modern         | brick frag  |
| 1 | Glass                     | 2  | 13g | Post-medieval  | clear embossed bottle frag; pale green bottle frag      |
| 1 | Iron                      | 1  | 6g  | Unknown        | nail  |
| 1 | Pottery                   | 1  | 9g  | Med./Post-Med. | green glazed, ?possibly late Grimston                   |
| 1 | Pottery                   | 7  | 17g | Post-medieval  | 2x stoneware; white glazed                              |
| 2 | Ceramic building material | 14 | 51g | Post-medieval  | roof tile & brick frags                                 |
| 2 | Copper alloy              | 1  | 2g  | Post-medieval  | button; flat circular, plain, with wire loop on reverse |
| 2 | Glass                     | 1  | 1g  | Post-medieval  | clear bottle frag                                       |
| 2 | Iron                      | 1  | 28g | Post-medieval  | heel iron or small (very) horseshoe                     |
| 2 | Iron                      | 1  | 1g  | Post-medieval  | nail; H29.5   |
| 2 | Iron                      | 1  | 2g  | Unknown        | ?nail   |
| 2 | Pottery                   | 4  | 4g  | Post-medieval  | white glazed; transfer printed                          |
| 3 | Ceramic building material | 2  | 7g  | Modern         | wall tile, pictorial                                    |
| 3 | Ceramic building material | 1  | 14g | Modern         | brick frag  |
| 3 | Ceramic building material | 9  | 98g | Post-medieval  | roof tile & brick frags                                 |
| 3 | Clay pipe                 | 1  | 1g  | Post-medieval  | mouthpiece, rounded                                     |
| 3 | Iron                      | 1  | 7g  | Unknown        | nail; H68   |
| 3 | Iron                      | 1  | 29g | Post-medieval  | ?horseshoe frag   |




### ***ENF144934: The Playing Field, Mill Road:***

The Playing Field is located on the northside of Mill Lane, almost opposite the Village Hall and the Primary School. It gently slopes to the south, but has a sharp slope down to Mill Lane at its southern boundary. Metal detecting in the field to the east in 1995 (NHER31448) produced two Roman brooches and a small amount of Roman, Anglo-Saxon, medieval and post-medieval material.

The historic mapping and the text of the enclosure act (NRO C/Sce 1/1) suggests that Low Green was located on the south side of Mill Lane, suggesting that the modern Playing Field is located on a common-edge. Such areas in Norfolk attracted settlement from the Late Anglo-Saxon to post-medieval periods.

Natural geology was not encountered in this test-pit, partly as a result of running out of time (This test-pit was excavated one evening as a practise exercise), and partly because there appears to have been a build-up of colluvial material at the southern end of this field, similar to the situation in test-pit ENF144937 which was in a very similar location topographically. No material earlier than the post-medieval period was recovered.

|   |                                |                                  |               |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| ENF144934   |                                | Recreation Ground, Mill Lane     |               |
|  | <b>Centre point:</b>           |                                  |               |
|   | 615847<br>298516               |                                  |               |
|   | <b>Height at ground level:</b> |                                  |               |
|   | 39.10m<br>OD                   |                                  |               |
|   | <b>Thickness</b>               | <b>Description</b>               | <b>Finds</b>  |
| <b>Spit 1</b>   | 0.1m                           | Dark brown soil with rare flints | Post-medieval |
| <b>Spit 2</b>   | 0.2m                           | Dark brown soil with rare flints | Post-medieval |
| <b>Spit 3</b>   | 0.24m                          | Dark brown soil with rare flints | Unknown       |
| <b>Natural geology</b>  |                                | Natural not reached              |               |

| Context | Material                  | Qt | Wt | Period        | Notes |
|---------|---------------------------|----|----|---------------|-------|
| 1       | Ceramic building material | 3  | 3g | Post-medieval |       |
| 1       | Glass                     | 2  | 6g | Post-medieval |       |


|   |                           |   |     |               |   |
|---|---------------------------|---|-----|---------------|---|
| 1 | Pottery                   | 2 | 5g  | Post-medieval |   |
| 2 | Ceramic building material | 8 | 25g | Post-medieval | 2 x large roof tile frags; 6 tiny fragments           |
| 2 | Mortar                    | 1 | 8g  | Post-medieval | cement mortar type material, small cbm attached       |
| 3 | Coal                      | 2 | 3g  | Unknown       |   |
| 3 | Iron                      | 1 | 5g  | Unknown       | nail; L>44; missing part of shank; rounded domed head |

### **ENF144935: Marsh Cottage, Mill Lane:**

Marsh Cottage is located in a valley bottom, only 50-60m north of the parish boundary with Ashwellthorpe. Both Marsh Cottage and the neighbouring Ashfield both appear on the First Edition Ordnance Survey (c.1885) and the Tithe map (c.1840) but are not shown on the 1731-6 map. The 1731-36 map (NRO HNR 15/5) does show the site of these two cottages as being at the eastern end of 'Spong Marsh', an area of common land. The Enclosure award of 1779 (NRO C/Sce 1/1) provides for a private road 12 feet wide beginning at the east end of an ancient lane leading from Spong Marsh to Low Green and proceeding south on the west side of allotment for the poor across Spong Marsh to 2 cottages belonging to Robert Lovett and Thomas Sheldrake. That road is almost certainly the track from Mill Lane to Marsh Cottage and Ashfield.

Earthworks are present in the field to the north of Marsh Cottage (NHER49137), interpreted as field boundaries and curved banks associated with dredging the adjacent stream. The curved banks could be the remains of periglacial features known as pingos. Metal detecting to the east of Marsh Cottage has produced a Roman coin and medieval to post-medieval metal items (NHER29213).

Like the test-pit at Cherrytrees (ENF144933), natural geology was not reached, partly due to time constraints and partly the depth of the overlying deposits. The finds recovered were post-medieval in date and suggest that Marsh Cottage is of post-medieval origin.

|   |                                |                                  |               |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| ENF144935   |                                | Marsh Cottage, Mill Lane         |               |
|  | <b>Centre point:</b>           |                                  |               |
|   | 616173 298108                  |                                  |               |
|   | <b>Height at ground level:</b> |                                  |               |
|   | 33.25m OD                      |                                  |               |
|   | <b>Thickness</b>               | <b>Description</b>               | <b>Finds</b>  |
| <b>Spit 1</b>   | 0.04m                          | Dark brown soil with rare flints | Modern        |
| <b>Spit 2</b>   | 0.14m                          | Dark brown soil with rare flints | Post-medieval |
| <b>Spit 3</b>   |                                | Dark brown soil with rare flints | Post-medieval |
| <b>Natural geology</b>  |                                | Natural not reached              |               |

| Context | Material    | Qty | Wt | Period  | Notes |
|---------|-------------|-----|----|---------|-------|
| 2       | Burnt flint | 2   | 4g | Unknown |       |

|   |                           |    |      |               |  |
|---|---------------------------|----|------|---------------|--|
| 2 | Ceramic building material | 14 | 79g  | Post-medieval | brick & roof tile  |
| 2 | Clay pipe                 | 1  | 1g   | Post-medieval | small bowl frag  |
| 2 | Glass                     | 5  | 9g   | Post-medieval | opaque white decorative frag; two green bottle frags; 2x clear bottle frags  |
| 2 | Iron                      | 4  | 19g  | Unknown       | Nails  |
| 2 | Metalworking debris       | 2  | 4g   | Unknown       |  |
| 2 | Pottery                   | 36 | 24g  | Post-medieval |  |
| 3 | Animal bone               | 1  | 2g   | Unknown       |  |
| 3 | Burnt flint               | 8  | 19g  | Unknown       |  |
| 3 | Ceramic building material | 44 | 206g | Post-medieval | roof tile and brick mixed; many small fragments  |
| 3 | Clay pipe                 | 2  | 1g   | Post-medieval | plain stem frag; ribbed bowl fragment  |
| 3 | Clay pipe                 | 1  | 2g   | Post-medieval | decorated stem frag; one side JOS in relief with a star to one side; NOR in relief with a ?horse to one side; leaves down seams; ?19thc. |
| 3 | Glass                     | 11 | 32g  | Post-medieval | 5x green bottle frags; 5x clear bottle frags; 1x clear window frag   |
| 3 | Iron                      | 1  | 4g   | Unknown       | Nail   |
| 3 | Pottery                   | 63 | 68g  | Post-medieval | 1x salt-glazed stoneware; 2x flowerpot; 1x stoneware; 1x iron glazed; white wares, transfer printed wares                                |
| 3 | Slate                     | 1  | 3g   | Post-medieval | Roof slate   |

### **ENF144936: Rose Cottage, Norwich Road:**

Rose Cottage was located on the west side of the Norwich Road (the Old Turnpike and modern B1113) and probably dates to the 1830s. It is depicted on both the First Edition Ordnance Survey map (c.1885) and the Tithe map (c.1840), but the 1832 Turnpike map (NRO C/Scf 1/505) and the 1731-6 map (NRO HNR 15/5) shows no buildings here, just Spong Marsh (an area of common). The house is constructed of 2 ½ inch soft red bricks laid in Flemish bond. It is of an old fashioned three-cell plan type with a massive off-centre chimney stack, much more typical of a 17<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse. Rose Cottage is located at the eastern end of Spong Marsh (common) and maybe in the allotment given to Joseph Hiddle (gentleman of Ashwellthorpe) at enclosure (NRO C/Sce 1/1).

A Roman brooch, fragments of Saxon brooches, and medieval metalwork found by metal detecting in the field across the B1113 (NHER 35712)

Natural geology was not reached in this test-pit, but previous groundworks in the garden had found it at c. 1.8m below present ground level (Paulo.. pers. com.).

The topsoil was c.0.25m deep and contained mainly modern and post-medieval material but also one abraded prehistoric flint waste flake. The subsoil contained mainly post-medieval material but again also contained an abraded prehistoric flint waste flake.

| ENF144936              |           | Rose Cottage, Norwich Road                                 |               |
|------------------------|-----------|--|---------------|
|                        |           | <b>Centre point:</b>                                       |               |
|                        |           | 616353 297995  |               |
|                        |           | <b>Height at ground level:</b>                             |               |
|                        |           | 34.00m OD  |               |
|                        | Thickness | Description  | Finds         |
| <b>Spit 1</b>          | 0.1m      | Mid greyish brown soil with rare flints                    | Modern        |
| <b>Spit 2</b>          | 0.23m     | Mid greyish brown sandy soil with rare flints and charcoal | Modern        |
| <b>Spit 3</b>          | 0.32m     | Sandy soil with rare flints and charcoal                   | Post-medieval |
| <b>Spit 4</b>          | 0.4m      | Sandy soil with rare flints and charcoal                   |               |
| <b>Spit 5</b>          | 0.5m      | Sandy soil with rare flints                                |               |
| <b>Natural Geology</b> |           | Natural not reached  |               |

| Context | Material                  | Qty | Wt  | Period        | Notes  |
|---------|---------------------------|-----|-----|---------------|--|
| 1       | Ceramic building material | 2   | 13g | Post-medieval | brick frags  |
| 1       | Mortar                    | 1   | 7g  | Modern        | render   |
| 2       | Aluminium                 | 1   | 8g  | Modern        | strip  |
| 2       | Animal bone               | 1   | 2g  | Unknown       | ?rabbit tibia  |
| 2       | Ceramic building material | 7   | 22g | Post-medieval | 1 x glazed tile frag; 3 x roof tile frags; 3 x brick frags |
| 2       | Glass                     | 3   | 7g  | Post-medieval | clear and pale green bottle frags.                         |
| 2       | Glass                     | 1   | 1g  | Modern        | Bead; white; spherical, with central hole                  |
| 2       | Iron                      | 1   | 8g  | Post-medieval | Rod, bent  |
| 2       | Iron                      | 3   | 11g | Unknown       | Nails  |
| 2       | Mortar                    | 1   | 12g | Modern        | render   |
| 2       | Pottery                   | 3   | 7g  | Post-medieval | 2 x white ware; 1 x iron glazed hand painted pattern       |
| 2       | Slate                     | 2   | 10g | Post-medieval | Roof slate   |
| 2       | Steel                     | 1   | 2g  | Modern        | Nail; H33; flat circular head                              |
| 2       | Worked flint              | 1   | 5g  | Prehistoric   | abraded primary flake                                      |
| 3       | ?Aluminium                | 1   | 5g  | Modern        | strip  |
| 3       | Animal bone               | 2   | 3g  | Unknown       | inc. small animal, rodent or herpetofauna                  |
| 3       | Ceramic building material | 14  | 89g | Post-medieval | 3 x ?roof tile frags; brick                                |
| 3       | Glass                     | 3   | 5g  | Post-medieval | clear bottle glass   |
| 3       | Iron                      | 3   | 8g  | Unknown       | Nails  |
| 3       | Mortar                    | 2   | 16g | Post-medieval |  |
| 3       | Pottery                   | 3   | 11g | Post-medieval | white ware   |
| 3       | Worked flint              | 1   | 2g  | Prehistoric   | abraded tertiary flake                                     |

### **ENF144937: 33 Millside, Mill Road:**

Millside is a small development of post-World War Two local authority housing on the north side of Mill Road, fronting onto Spong Marsh. It was not present when the 1946 aerial photograph (ref) was taken, whilst the other similar local authority housing development in the village (River View) was in the process of being built.


The Millside estate lies on an old common edge, making it possible that earlier settlement may have been present here.

Graham, the occupant of 33 Millside reports seeing concentrations of post-boilers (burnt flint) in the field to the north.

Just to the east is the site of a post-medieval windmill marked on Faden's map of 1797. It was a post mill last used in 1904 (NHER 15391).

Despite being excavated to a depth of 0.5m, this test-pit did not encounter natural geology. Like the test-pit in the Playing Field (ENF144934), this could be due to a build-up of colluvium again the edge of Mill Road.

The first two spits, down to 0.23m below ground level, were topsoil containing mainly modern artefacts, but also one fragment of possibly prehistoric burnt flint (pot-boiler). The second two spits, down to a depth of 0.4m below ground level, contained charcoal and mainly post-medieval artefacts but also tow fragments of burnt flint and two prehistoric flint waste flakes. The final spit contained no charcoal, post-medieval artefacts and six fragments of burnt flint and one prehistoric flint waste flake.

|  |                                |  |               |
|--|--------------------------------|--|---------------|
| ENF144937  |                                | 33 Millside, Mill Lane                                     |               |
|  | <b>Centre point:</b>           |  |               |
|  | 616455 298145                  |  |               |
|  | <b>Height at ground level:</b> |  |               |
|  | 35.49m OD                      |  |               |
|  | <b>Thickness</b>               | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Finds</b>  |
| <b>Spit 1</b>  | 0.1m                           | Mid greyish brown soil with rare flints                    | Modern        |
| <b>Spit 2</b>  | 0.23m                          | Mid greyish brown sandy soil with rare flints and charcoal | Modern        |
| <b>Spit 3</b>  | 0.32m                          | Sandy soil with rare flints and charcoal                   | Post-medieval |



|                        |      |  |               |
|------------------------|------|--|---------------|
| <b>Spit 4</b>          | 0.4m | Sandy soil with rare flints and charcoal | modern        |
| <b>Spit 5</b>          | 0.5m | Sandy soil with rare flints              | Post-medieval |
| <b>Natural Geology</b> |      | Natural not reached                      |               |

| Context | Material                  | Qty | Wt   | Period        | Notes                                      |
|---------|---------------------------|-----|------|---------------|--|
| 1       | Ceramic material building | 9   | 99g  | Modern        | Brick                                      |
| 1       | Ceramic material building | 1   | 7g   | Modern        | Glazed wall tile                           |
| 1       | Iron                      | 1   | 6g   | Modern        | small trapezoidal blade with central pivot |
| 1       | Mortar                    | 2   | 35g  | Modern        | render                                     |
| 1       | Pottery                   | 1   | 3g   | Post-medieval | Willow pattern                             |
| 2       | Burnt flint               | 1   | 5g   | Unknown       |  |
| 2       | Ceramic material building | 4   | 10g  | Modern        | brick frags                                |
| 2       | Glass                     | 2   | 12g  | Modern        | flat clear window frags                    |
| 2       | Mortar                    | 6   | 101g | Modern        | render                                     |
| 2       | Pottery                   | 1   | 1g   | Post-medieval | blue and white transfer printed            |
| 3       | Ceramic material building | 1   | 6g   | Post-medieval | Brick frag.                                |
| 3       | Iron                      | 1   | 3g   | Unknown       | Fragment                                   |
| 3       | Mortar                    | 1   | 4g   | Post-medieval | white lime mortar                          |
| 3       | Pottery                   | 2   | 12g  | Post-medieval | 1 x white ware; 1 x iron glazed            |
| 3       | Worked flint              | 2   | 8g   | Prehistoric   | tertiary flake                             |
| 4       | ?Chalk                    | 1   | 3g   | Modern        | marble; spherical ball                     |
| 4       | Burnt flint               | 2   | 12g  | Unknown       |  |
| 4       | Ceramic material building | 1   | 8g   | Post-medieval | abraded brick frag                         |
| 4       | Mortar                    | 1   | 2g   | Post-medieval | small frag                                 |
| 4       | Pottery                   | 1   | 10g  | Post-medieval | stoneware                                  |
| 5       | Burnt flint               | 6   | 46g  | Unknown       |  |
| 5       | Ceramic material building | 2   | 2g   | Post-medieval | tiny frags                                 |
| 5       | Glass                     | 1   | 1g   | Post-medieval | pale green bottle frag                     |
| 5       | Iron                      | 1   | 22g  | Unknown       | ?nail                                      |
| 5       | Worked flint              | 1   | 1g   | Prehistoric   | secondary flake                            |

### **ENF144938: 28 Stevens Lane:**

River Side is another post-World War Two local authority estate which can be seen under construction on the 1946 aerial photograph. It is located at the eastern end of the hamlet of Toprow, fronting the northern side of Marks Common, enclosed in 1777 (NRO C/Sce 1/1). Toprow consists of a row of cottages on its north side, some of which predate enclosure (Including HERs 34434 and 34433 which date to the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries), while those on the southside of the road all post-date the enclosure act.


During gardening operations, a large number of burnt flint 'pot boilers' as well as worked flint flakes and two Late Neolithic to Bronze Age flint scrapers have been discovered (and reported to the HER but never put on the record).

This test-pit did encounter natural geology at its base, below the topsoil and a thin layer of subsoil.

Three spits were recorded, the top two being topsoil, Spit 3 being a narrow layer of subsoil.

The finds recovered consisted mainly of ceramic building material fragments dating from the construction of the council estate in 1946 together with burnt flint fragments, probably dating to the prehistoric. There were also fragments of pottery and a little other material, probably originating from spreads of manure both after the house was built and before, including one fragment of medieval pottery.

The subsoil layer (Spit 3) contained only one find, a fragment of possibly Prehistoric burnt flint, which may indicate that the subsoil layer is of considerable age.

|   |                  |  |                      |
|---|------------------|--|----------------------|
| <b>ENF144938</b>  |                  | 28 River Side, Stevens Lane, River View, Toprow                |                      |
|  |                  | <b>Centre point:</b>   |                      |
|   |                  |  | 616888 297987        |
|   |                  | <b>Height at ground level:</b>                                 |                      |
|   |                  |  | 33.99m OD            |
|   | <b>Thickness</b> | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Finds</b>         |
| <b>Spit 1</b>   |                  | Topsoil. Dark greyish brown sandy clay with occasional flints. | Modern               |
| <b>Spit 2</b>   |                  | Topsoil. Dark greyish brown sandy clay with occasional flints. | Modern               |
| <b>Spit 3</b>   |                  | Subsoil. Mid yellowish-brown clay with occasional flints.      | Possibly Prehistoric |

|                        |  |                                  |  |
|------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Natural geology</b> |  | Cream clay with chalk fragments. |  |
|------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|

| Context | Material                  | Qty | Wt   | Period        | Notes              |
|---------|---------------------------|-----|------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1       | Burnt flint               | 22  | 245g | Unknown       |                    |
| 1       | Ceramic building material | 7   | 404g | Modern        | frogged brick frag |
| 1       | Ceramic building material | 6   | 55g  | Post-medieval | brick frags        |
| 1       | Glass                     | 1   | 1g   | Post-medieval | clear bottle frag  |
| 1       | Iron                      | 2   | 10g  | Modern        | nails              |
| 1       | Mortar                    | 3   | 14g  | Post-medieval |                    |
| 1       | Pottery                   | 4   | 6g   | Post-medieval | white glazed; GRE  |
| 1       | Slate                     | 2   | 2g   | Post-medieval | Roof slate         |
| 1       | Worked flint              | 2   | 3g   | Prehistoric   | tertiary flakes    |
| 2       | Pottery                   | 1   | 3g   | Post-medieval | GRE                |
| 2       | Ceramic building material | 4   | 64g  | Modern        |                    |
| 2       | Ceramic building material | 30  | 239g | Post-medieval |                    |
| 2       | Worked flints             | 2   |      | Prehistoric   | Waste flakes       |
| 2       | Oyster shell              | 1   |      | Unknown       |                    |
| 2       | Pottery                   | 1   |      | Medieval      | Handle spring      |
| 3       | Burnt flint               | 1   | 31g  | Unknown       |                    |

### **ENF147191: Hawthorn Cottage, Wymondham Rd**

Hawthorn Cottage was located at the corner of Ashwellthorpe Road and Wymondham Road in the centre of the modern village. It appears to be a small 19<sup>th</sup> century brick-built house, possibly located in the area of Low Green.

This immediate area is not covered by the early mapping and Faden's map (1797) shows no buildings here, but does show buildings north of Wymondham Road. The Tithe map shows a smaller building in the location of the present Hawthorne Cottage, which may be part of the present building.


Natural chalky clay was encountered at a depth of 0.5m, suggesting that this pit was not located in the damp valley bottom which nearby Cherrytrees and Marsh Cottage were.

Very little early material was present apart from the usual prehistoric burnt and worked flint, although context 2 did yield one sherd of 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century pottery.

The topsoil (contexts 1, 2 and 3) produced a great amount of modern and post medieval material including a small conch shell and an incomplete 19<sup>th</sup> century clay pipe bowl in the shape of a Turks head. Also present was 17 fragments of burnt flint, two prehistoric worked flint flakes and the sherd of Late Medieval Transitional pottery.

The subsoil (contexts 4 and 5) produced a smaller amount of post-medieval material, but no modern artefacts. The post-medieval material included part of a 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century crotal bell (for livestock), clay pipe stems and roofing slate.

The finds are suggestive that settlement began here in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, but that there was prehistoric and perhaps late medieval occupation in the vicinity.

|   |                      |  |              |
|---|----------------------|--|--------------|
| <b>ENF:147191</b>   |                      | Hawthorne Cottage, Wymondham Road.                         |              |
|  |                      | <b>Centre point:</b>                                       |              |
|   |                      | 615722 298592  |              |
|   |                      | <b>Height at ground level:</b>                             |              |
|   |                      | 39.74m OD  |              |
|   | <b>Depth to base</b> | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Finds</b> |
| <b>Spit 1</b>   | 0.05m                | Dark brown clayey sand with occasional flints and charcoal | Modern       |
| <b>Spit 2</b>   | 0.2-0.24m            | Dark brown clayey sand with occasional flints and charcoal | Modern       |
| <b>Spit 3</b>   | 0.26-0.3m            | Dark brown sandy clay with occasional flints and charcoal  | Modern       |

|                        |           |   |               |
|------------------------|-----------|---|---------------|
| <b>Spit 4</b>          | 0.36-0.4m | Mid Brown sandy clay with occasional flints and charcoal  | Post-medieval |
| <b>Spit 5</b>          | 0.37-0.5m | Mid Brown sandy clay with occasional flints and charcoal  | Post-medieval |
| <b>Natural geology</b> |           | Pale brownish cream sandy clay with moderate chalk lumps and flecks, occasional flints and frequent precipitated iron |               |

| Context | Material                  | Qty | Wt     | Period         | Notes  |
|---------|---------------------------|-----|--------|----------------|--|
| 1       | Burnt flint               | 2   | 18g    | Unknown        |  |
| 1       | Ceramic building material | 4   | 22g    | Modern         | tile   |
| 1       | Ceramic building material | 12  | 165g   | Post-medieval  | roof tile & brick frags  |
| 1       | Clay pipe                 | 2   | 2g     | Post-medieval  | plain stem frags   |
| 1       | Glass                     | 8   | 19g    | Post-medieval  | 1x pale green bottle frag; 4x clear window frags; 3x clear bottle frags      |
| 1       | Iron                      | 1   | 19g    | Post-medieval  | heel iron  |
| 1       | Iron                      | 2   | 7g     | Unknown        | nails  |
| 1       | Pottery                   | 12  | 17g    | Post-medieval  | transfer printed wares; GRE  |
| 1       | Slate                     | 1   | 8g     | Post-medieval  | Roof slate   |
| 2       | Aluminium                 | 1   | 1g     | Modern         | foil   |
| 2       | Animal bone               | 1   | 1g     | Unknown        | tooth  |
| 2       | Burnt flint               | 14  | 112g   | Unknown        |  |
| 2       | Ceramic building material | 7   | 77g    | Modern         | tile & brick frags   |
| 2       | Ceramic building material | 39  | 3,602g | Post-medieval  | brick & tile frags   |
| 2       | Clay pipe                 | 1   | 3g     | Post-medieval  | incomplete bowl in shape of Turk's head; 19thc.                              |
| 2       | Clay pipe                 | 2   | 2g     | Post-medieval  | plain stem frags   |
| 2       | Glass                     | 15  | 38g    | Post-medieval  | clear bottle frags; green bottle frag  |
| 2       | Iron                      | 7   | 28g    | Unknown        | nails  |
| 2       | Iron                      | 1   | 11g    | Post-medieval  | heel iron  |
| 2       | Iron                      | 1   | 14g    | Post-medieval  | heel iron frag   |
| 2       | Iron                      | 1   | 33g    | Unknown        | flat piece   |
| 2       | Metalworking debris       | 2   | 7g     | Unknown        |  |
| 2       | Mortar                    | 14  | 541g   | Post-medieval  | render, cement mortar  |
| 2       | Plaster                   | 3   | 13g    | Modern         | one with some green pigment visible  |
| 2       | Pottery                   | 44  | 98g    | Post-medieval  | stoneware; speckled glaze; white glaze, etc.                                 |
| 2       | Pottery                   | 1   | 8g     | Med./Post-Med. | LMT  |
| 2       | Shell                     | 1   | 1g     | Unknown        | oyster frag  |
| 2       | Slate                     | 1   | 3g     | Post-medieval  | Roof slate   |
| 2       | Worked flint              | 2   | 5g     | Prehistoric    | primary flakes   |
| 3       | Aluminium                 | 1   | 1g     | Modern         | foil   |
| 3       | Animal bone               | 6   | 13g    | Unknown        |  |
| 3       | Burnt flint               | 1   | 20g    | Unknown        |  |
| 3       | Ceramic building material | 6   | 52g    | Modern         | tile frags   |
| 3       | Ceramic building material | 16  | 131g   | Post-medieval  | brick & tile frags   |
| 3       | Clay pipe                 | 2   | 5g     | Post-medieval  | plain stem frags   |
| 3       | Copper alloy              | 1   | 2g     | Post-medieval  | incomplete button, circular, missing front and loop                          |
| 3       | Glass                     | 13  | 25g    | Post-medieval  | green bottle frags; ribbed clear vessel frag; clear bottle frags             |
| 3       | Glass/Copper alloy        | 1   | 10g    | Modern         | button; faceted black glass front; small copper alloy loop insert on reverse |
| 3       | Iron                      | 1   | 22g    | Post-medieval  | heel iron frag   |
| 3       | Iron                      | 1   | 39g    | Post-medieval  | horseshoe frag   |
| 3       | Iron                      | 2   | 8g     | Unknown        | nails  |
| 3       | Iron                      | 1   | 4g     | Unknown        | fragment   |
| 3       | Pottery                   | 45  | 108g   | Post-medieval  | black basalt ware; white glazed; transfer printed wares                      |
| 3       | Shell                     | 1   | 39g    | Unknown        | conch-type   |
| 4       | Ceramic building material | 2   | 225g   | Post-medieval  | brick frags  |
| 4       | Clay pipe                 | 3   | 5g     | Post-medieval  | stem frags, plain  |

|   |                           |    |     |               |  |
|---|---------------------------|----|-----|---------------|--|
| 4 | Copper alloy              | 1  | 9g  | Post-medieval | crotal bell, incomplete, part of base only with initials WG in a semi-circle, William Gwynne of Aldbourne, 17th-18th century |
| 4 | Pottery                   | 16 | 45g | Post-medieval | transfer printed wares; GRE  |
| 4 | Slate                     | 2  | 9g  | Post-medieval | Roof slate   |
| 5 | Animal bone               | 1  | 1g  | Unknown       |  |
| 5 | Ceramic building material | 10 | 53g | Post-medieval | 9x roof tile frags; 1x brick frag  |
| 5 | Iron                      | 2  | 13g | Unknown       | fragments  |
| 5 | Pottery                   | 1  | 1g  | Post-medieval | white glazed   |
| 5 | Slate                     | 1  | 3g  | Post-medieval | Roof slate   |

## Discussion

The primary aims of this project was to explore the history and development of a typical South Norfolk parish and to provide an opportunity for community development.

Unfortunately the small number of test-pits excavated at this stage means that those aims have only partly been met. However, this could be the start of a longer project as more test-pits are excavated in a wider area.

The eight test-pits excavated were concentrated in the southern part of the village, in the valley bottom and northern slope of the tributary of the River Tas which flows west to the Yare and forms the southern parish boundary.

The three test-pits excavated in the valley bottom did not encounter natural geology and one of the excavators claimed that when he had had a hole dug in the garden by machine, natural sand was only visible at a depth of around two metres below ground level. The strict archaeological value, certainly of test-pits ENF144936 and ENF144935, is therefore limited. Test-pit ENF144933 was also in the valley bottom, but the presence of a late medieval pottery sherd suggests that there was medieval settlement in that area.

The two other test-pits close to ENF144933 were richer in medieval remains. ENF147191 yielded another fragment of late medieval pottery, as well as a great amount of post-medieval material. Test-pit ENF144931 however, produced the largest assemblage of medieval pottery (15 sherds) and recognisable archaeological features and layers. This strongly suggests medieval settlement on the north side of Wymondham Road. The earliest maps of the village (NRO HNR 15/5), dating to the 1730s, show occupation on the north side of the road, and a common on the south side, making this settlement type 'common-edge'.

The two test pits (ENF144987 and ENF144938) excavated on the northern slope of the valley of the tributary of the Tas, both produced a large number of burnt flints and a smaller number of worked flints, evidence of probable prehistoric occupation in the area. Such an area, on a south facing slope and with a readily accessible water supply, would have been an attractive location.

It is hoped that further test-pits within the parish and indeed further historical research of all types will, in the future expand our picture of the development of the parish.



