

## Resume of the Follow-Up Nayland Test Pit Results

by

**Dr. Carenza Lewis on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015 at Nayland Village Hall**

We were delighted to welcome Carenza Lewis back to Nayland to hear about the detailed results from the 16 Test Pits which were dug in September 2014. The total number of pits so far dug in Nayland is now 50.

Interestingly 2,000 test pits have been dug in 50 villages throughout East Anglia under the auspices of Access Cambridge Archaeology. 110 being the record in any one place.

The contents of the latest pits in Nayland have been analysed and a final report will be available shortly on [www.access.arch.cam.ac.uk](http://www.access.arch.cam.ac.uk)

Carenza and her team of experts have summarised the Finds and concluded:

**Roman period:** clusters of Finds in Stoke Road, Bear St/A134, indicate possibility of dispersed farmhouses/settlements.

**Late Anglo Saxon** (mid 9<sup>th</sup>-mid 11<sup>th</sup>) evidence in Newlands Lane and the garden of the Old Vicarage which could indicate 2 separate farmsteads.

**1100-1350:** The present day regularly planned village of straight streets was formed with settlement extending about half way along today's Bear St. Newlands Lane, in spite of its name, is likely to be an Anglo Saxon winding lane close to an early settlement, traces of which were found in the field to the south of the lane. During this High Medieval period the population of East Anglia doubled. The average percentage of pottery finds per pit of this period was 40% in East Anglia and 58% in Nayland.

**1350-1550: Black Death to the Reformation:** Drop of 40% in population. 21% of Finds were from this period throughout East Anglia but in Nayland it was **74%**. Carenza considered that this was because Nayland's economy was rooted in commerce and fewer people were affected, whereas rural settlements dependent on agriculture, were decimated. Nayland, together with Sudbury and Walberswick (then a port) are the only three settlements to show a rise in pottery sherds out of the 50 settlements recorded so far in East Anglia. This was the period of most growth in the village when other settlements were declining.

**1500-1600:** pottery appears for the first time on the south side of Bear Street and continues in Stoke direction. (Showing the growth of the village)

**Late 16<sup>th</sup> Century – late 18<sup>th</sup> Century:** East Anglian average pottery of this period is 59% per site and in Nayland it is 82%.

In summing up Carenza emphasised that seemingly insignificant sherds of pottery can reveal extraordinary results because 90% of it is easily datable.

The legacy from the first Test Pit Dig in October 2012 stirred up so much interest that a Follow-Up was organised and there is definitely a potential for more test pits to be dug in future especially in the centre of the village, around the church and Carenza considers there is now enough expertise within the village for us to undertake this ourselves without the need for expensive experts.

Mary George gave a vote of thanks to Carenza for inspiring us all to get involved with these great community projects which are open to all ages and which have had such amazing results.

AC

24.6.15