

## Anglo-Saxon

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### ***Introduction: the unity of South-East England***

The three counties of Kent, Surrey and Sussex (hereafter referring to the historic South Saxon kingdom embracing the modern counties of East and West Sussex) form a cohesive geographical entity. Each shares a distinctive combination of landscapes or 'pays' structured by a geological division between chalk downland and weald, and together they form a maritime peninsula offering the shortest sea crossing to the continental mainland (Drewett et al. 1988: 1-2; Short 2006: 23-64). These qualities shaped the imprint made by Anglo-Saxon communities, influencing the timing and trajectory of key social and economic developments between the fall of the Roman administration and the Norman Conquest by which time England emerged as a unified nation state. The first part of this document provides a brief summary of past work on the subject followed by a consideration of two issues which help to frame subsequent discussion: the nature of the Romano-British/Anglo-Saxon transition and establishing a chronological framework for the Anglo-Saxon period. The existing resource is then evaluated under a series of over-arching themes: territoriality, rural settlement, burial and religion, towns, and craft, industry and domestic consumption.

### ***Previous work***

There have been a number of period-based studies and syntheses focused on the South-East region over the past 30 years. The only work to provide overall synthetic coverage of the three counties, however, remains Mark Gardiner's contribution on the 'Early' and 'Middle and Late' Anglo-Saxon periods appearing in *The South-East to A.D. 1000* (Gardiner 1988). Otherwise the focus of attention has been more narrowly concentrated upon on each of the South-East's component counties.

The publication trail for Sussex commences with relevant chapters in Brandon's (1974) synthesis *The Sussex Landscape*, a work of historical geography written in the mould of Hoskins' seminal work, *The Making of the English Landscape* (1955). Archaeology receives more concentrated attention in the edited volume *The South Saxons* (Brandon 1978), which includes contributions on the territorial framework of the South Saxon kingdom, rural settlement, towns, place-names, coinage, the church, the Weald and the Domesday evidence. This is followed by Martin Welch's *Early Anglo-Saxon Sussex* (1983), a study primarily based upon the county's quota of 5th–8th century Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, the main conclusions of which appear in updated form in a collected volume on the origins of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms (Welch 1989). Susan Kelly's edited volume on the charters of Selsey (1998) is of key importance for understanding the historical framework of the Anglo-Saxon period and her dissection of the endowment of the South Saxon See contains much of immediate relevance to the archaeologist. Most recently, Gardiner (2003) has presented a new assessment and periodization of developments in the economy and landscape of the Sussex region between AD 450 and 1175, arguing for broad continuity from the late Anglo-Saxon period into the 12th century.

It is fair to say that the archaeological heritage of Anglo-Saxon Kent has received less systematic attention than its westerly neighbour, although recent work is transforming the situation. Landscape history provides a particularly important disciplinary backdrop to the county as enshrined by the work of Witney (1976) and Everitt (1986) which develop and refine an earlier study by Jolliffe (1933). At the heart of these studies is an investigation of the antiquity of territorial structure of the Kentish lathes. *The Archaeology of Kent to AD 1500* (ed. Leach 1982) brings us back into more material-based territory with essays on the Early Anglo-Saxon period and on towns specifically (Hawkes 1982; Tatton-Brown 1984). A number of important historical contributions by Brooks appeared in the 1980s including his definitive

volume on Christ Church, Canterbury (Brooks 1984), a lucid account of the Anglo-Saxon colonisation of Romney Marsh (1988) and an essay on the origins and territorial structure of the Kingdom of Kent (1989). Recent years have seen the publication of two relevant doctoral theses: Richardson's providing a much-needed synthesis of Early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries (2005); and Brookes' new social and economic perspectives on the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Kent as revealed by landscape and GIS modelling (2007a). Finally, a long overdue synthetic review has also been provided by Martin Welch (2007).

Synthetic coverage for the remaining of the three counties commences with the 'Saxon' chapter included in the *Archaeology of Surrey to 1540* (Poulton 1987). This is followed by two works by John Blair, the first an essay on the Anglo-Saxon origins of Surrey (1989) and the second, a more sustained, largely historical, analysis based on his PhD thesis, *Landholding, Church and Settlement in Early Medieval Surrey* (1991). More recently, Hines has drawn upon cemetery evidence and material culture to construct an independently derived archaeological argument for the territorial origins of Surrey (2004), whilst an essay in the same edited volume takes the opportunity to review the evidence for Anglo-Saxon Kingston (Andrews 2004).

### **Background: Chronology, Continuity and Transitions**

#### ***Becoming Anglo-Saxon: the Romano-British/Anglo-Saxon transition***

Discussion here will not rehearse recent debates on the 5th-century *Adventus Saxonum* as it applies to South-East England and the reliability of the fragmentary documentary evidence as a contemporary witness to those events (covered at some length in a South-East context by Gardiner 1988: 248-51; Lucy 2000: 155-74; Welch 2007). Suffice it to say that as a result of new recent scientific applications for tracking past population movements and the contemporary fluidity of European populations, the study of archaeological migrations has emerged critically enhanced from the revisionist climate of the 1980s and early 1990s (Härke 1998). Most archaeologists would now agree that the distinct cultural transitions witnessed during the 5th century were triggered by substantial and sustained influx of Germanic migrants (Wickham 2005: 311).

One of the major problems inhibiting our understanding of the structural and cultural transitions of the 5th century is the archaeological invisibility of native sub-Roman communities. Barely audible against the deafening implosion of *Romanitas*, by the end of the 5th century this cultural presence appears to have been all but replaced by an imported Anglo-Saxon one (Esmonde-Cleary 1989, 1995; Wickham 2005: 306-7). Given the difficulty of defining a sub-Roman cultural stratum in space and time, past analysis and discussion (see Gardiner 1988; Welch 2007: 194-201) has been weighted towards tracking strands of cultural continuity embracing five key areas: 1) British place-name survivals typified by 'Eccles' and 'Walton'; 2) Quoit-brooch style metalwork as an expression of lingering British influence over Anglo-Saxon cultural production; 3) the coincidence of Anglo-Saxon occupation/burial on sites with an attested Romano-British presence; 4) territorial structures; and 5) landscape and agricultural production. It should be said from the outset that these areas offer only a very weak echo of the character of sub-Roman society and administration; more often than not their real value lies in exposing the recycling of the past as a key strategy by which incoming Anglo-Saxon communities sought to embed themselves within a new cultural environment.

The mechanisms by which sub-Roman territory came under Anglo-Saxon control have generated a great deal of speculation in a South-East context. Many would now agree that the first sizeable tribal territories in Anglo-Saxon England - the so-called *regios* - bear some relationship to sub-Roman provinces that preceded them (Everitt 1986: 339-41; Bassett 1989; Wickham 2005: 309; Brooks 1989). In the sub-Kingdom of Surrey, for example, the concentration of 5th-century cemeteries close to Romano-British nodes situated on arterial routes leading south of *Londinium* has been argued to reflect the direct takeover of an extensive territorial hinterland surrounding the capital (Hines 2004). However, we must be

critical of using site distributions as the sole means of reconstructing the chronology and mechanics of Anglo-Saxon land-taking. For example, Welch's previous assertion (1983: 253-57) that central Sussex between the Rivers Ouse and Cuckmere formed a primary 'Germanic' enclave established on territory ceded by the vanquished sub-Roman authorities must now be questioned in light of the discovery of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Westhampnett, West Sussex, near the western border of the South Saxon kingdom (since joined by evidence for contemporary settlement (Fitzpatrick 1997; Chadwick 2006)).

The other area where there are reasonable grounds for accepting continuity is in the countryside, for it is clear that the majority of first-generation Anglo-Saxon settlements were implanted in the remnants of a Romano-British landscape (Bell 1989; Esmonde-Cleary 1995: 13-17; Wickham 2005: 311). This view is backed up both by the pollen record and by the landscape itself in cases where Roman period field systems can be shown to influence the pattern of early medieval field and parish boundaries, as argued locally for blocks of countryside at Ashstead in Surrey (Blair 1991: 29-30; 40) and at Cliffe north of Rochester in Kent (Nightingale 1952). Further work would no doubt bring to light additional evidence for this landscape inheritance; there is no reason why the co-axial field systems found in other regions of 'ancient' landscape should not exist in our area (Welch 2007: 194; Poulton 1987: 212-3). Environmental archaeology can play a key part in investigating continuity in landscape character and exploitation, through analysis of animal husbandry and agrarian systems.

By contrast, evidence for direct continuity at a micro scale in relation to specific settlements is more difficult to verify in spite of the consistent pattern of association in the location of Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon habitation sites (Poulton 1987: 214-5; Wickham 2005: 308; Welch 2007: 205-8). Critical scrutiny often reveals gaps in occupation and other structural discontinuities, for example at Rookery Hill, Bishopstone, where the sprawl of Anglo-Saxon houses extended over Romano-British field boundaries (Bell 1977). The recycling of Roman building materials in Kentish churches forms a central plank in Everitt's thesis that Anglo-Saxon royal *vills* were planted on Roman villas, but surely this 7th-century activity says more about attitudes to the past than it does about a seamless cultural transition from Briton to Anglo-Saxon (Tatton-Brown 1991). Precisely the same criticisms can be levelled at past attempts to read continuity in the burial record and the earliest monuments to Anglo-Saxon Christianity (see Richardson 2005: 54; Ward 2004; Welch 2007: 196). In light of the above, the question must be: where might we legitimately look for continuity in the archaeological record? This question ultimately takes us back to the elusive traces of sub-Roman culture, and the need for refining our chronological understanding of the 5th century, particularly in towns such as Canterbury where high-precision radiocarbon dating may yet reveal sub-Roman burials in its extra-mural cemeteries.

On reflection, it is perhaps not surprising that outward signs of socially constructed continuity appear to be strongest in Kent. For political alliances brought that Kingdom firmly within the cultural orbit of the Frankish world where the legacy of the Roman past was not only considerably stronger than in England, but where political and cultural aspirations were driven by a conscious emulation of the old imperial order. The conversion of the kingdom of Kent by the Roman mission under St Augustine and his successors only served to intensify such associations (Blair 2005: 39-43 and 65-72).

### ***Periodization and aftermath***

It is customary to divide the Anglo-Saxon period into three 200 year slices: 'early' (AD 450-650), 'mid' (AD 650-850), and 'late' (AD 850-1050) (Reynolds 1999: 23-4). How relevant is this traditional scheme to South-East England? One would have to agree with Gardiner (2003: 151) that for some, indeed many, parts of the archaeological resource, it has little value in helping us to think critically about socio-economic developments at the heart of archaeological enquiry. The dataset to which it arguably has most relevance is the cemetery record sequenced with respect to datable grave-goods, but the scheme largely breaks down when

applied to most settlement archaeology with the exception of a small group of documented Anglo-Saxon monasteries.

Our lack of chronological precision in dating Anglo-Saxon settlements largely derives from the fact that locally made pottery usually carries date-ranges of 200 years or more. Indeed, as Reynolds has observed (1999: 23), much of the 'daily life' experience recovered from excavated settlements is characterised by long-term continuities that have little or no relevance to the grand events of political history. Nevertheless, modern sampling regimes have opened up new vistas for examining the cultural impacts of such events as the Norman Conquest. For example, the zooarchaeological record demonstrates that the change in political regime was accompanied by shifts in animal management linked to increased commercialisation of arable and wool production (Sykes 2007) and the introduction of new Norman cultural attitudes to the procurement and consumption of animal species, especially amongst the landowning elite (e.g. the hunting of deer) (Sykes 2006b, 2007). How well the animal bone data from the Southeast accord with these models awaits more detailed analysis (Holmes forthcoming).

As an alternative, Gardiner (2003: 151) has advocated a new scheme covering two broad periods, 'Post-Roman' (AD 450-900), and 'Early Medieval', (AD 900-1175). Whereas the former is characterised by a low population level (recovering from a 5th-century slump), agrarian and craft production on a largely 'domestic' scale, and all but the most localised of exchange networks, the latter coincides with demographic expansion, intensified agricultural production, and the growth of a commercialised economy facilitated by towns and regional/international exchange networks (see Sykes 2006a, 2006b, 2007 for nation-wide models of the influence of urban growth on marketing of domestic and wild animals). In what follows, Gardiner's terminology will be substituted with the rather more generic labels 'early' and 'later' Anglo-Saxon, except in parts of the discussion where it is possible to speak in chronological terms sufficiently refined to distinguish between 'mid' and 'late' Saxon.

### ***Territoriality***

By the Norman Conquest, the South-East could claim a complex territorial hierarchy, some divisions relating to fairly recent and ongoing administrative developments and others to much older patterns of land-use and estate organisation (for general discussion of this theme see Reynolds 1999: 65-84). In common with other areas of southern England, the territorial geography of the region was to undergo considerable change over the Christian Anglo-Saxon period, the key dynamic being that of progressive fragmentation towards the compact, highly 'manorialised' landscape captured in Domesday Book (Hooke 1998: 54 and 68-80). Yet because this process of fission and reconfiguration frequently occurred along pre-existing fault-lines, echoes of earlier landscapes endured in the evolving pattern of administrative, tenurial and ecclesiastical boundaries. This fragmentation followed a distinctive path in once communally-exploited zones of weald and marsh, in the former case resulting in the complex tenurial pattern of woodland *dens* appended to distant manors (Witney 1976; Everitt 1986). Whilst we have a broad understanding of this process, previous work has tended to oversimplify the real picture of Wealden development. New research, however, is beginning to identify distinctive sub-regions of the Weald, each with its own landscape character and developmental history. For example, an examination of regions of Sussex and Surrey characterised by '*fald*' place-names, has identified a distinct morphological class of arc-shaped enclosure (defined by roads and streams) which may help to locate otherwise highly elusive foci of Anglo-Saxon settlement (Chatwin and Gardiner 2006; English and Turner 2004). Evidence of husbandry systems and agrarian activities could potentially assist in defining unique as well as broader patterns of landscape exploitation.

At the top of the administrative hierarchy are the three shires of the South-East, two relating to the kingdoms of the South Saxons, and the *Cantware* ('dwellers of Kent') respectively and the third *Sūþre-gē* – a southern province carved out from the kingdom of the Middle Saxons. How and when did this familiar tripartite pattern emerge? One way of investigating this question is

by studying the boundaries between the shires. The traditional conception, as expounded by Witney (1976: 74-6), is that the boundary separating Sussex from its neighbours was the product of *ad hoc* negotiations between animal herders utilising the Weald. This view is contradicted by the sharply delineated character of the boundary, respecting as it does prominent topographical features – along its western section East-West Wealden ridges, and along its eastern section the River Rother (Chatwin and Gardiner 2006: 33-4). The fact that component parts of once unified Wealden territories fall either side of the county boundary (as indicated by place-name evidence) provides a useful chronological indicator that accords with the view that the crystallisation of kingdom structures in South-East England occurred in the later 6th and 7th century (Chatwin and Gardiner 2006: 35; Bassett 1989).

The superficial neatness of these major territorial divisions belies a rather more complex situation since historical sources attest to the fact that both Kent and Sussex were characterised by multiple kingship. In Kent, the unique precedent of establishing two dioceses within a kingdom, at Canterbury and Rochester, appears to reflect a well established practice of joint rule perhaps dating back to the foundations of the Kentish dynasty (Yorke 1984: 14-15). The situation in Sussex was even more fragmented to the extent that there may have been as many as four or five kings based within the territory for a period during the 760s, perhaps with each ruling over a distinct tribal territory (Kelly 1998: lxxii-lxxvi); the present division between East and West Sussex with their respective administrative capitals at Lewes and Chichester is thus likely to be a reflection of the rationalised political geography of the late Anglo-Saxon province. It has been argued that this fragmentation seen in political authority, with its varied implications for the wealth and economy of the South Saxon kingdom, may well be rooted in the region's physical geography (Gardiner 2003: 158-9).

Current understanding suggests that the kingdoms described above coalesced from an older stratum of tribal units – or *regios* – representing the earliest territorial manifestations of Anglo-Saxon cultural identity in southern England (see various case-studies in Bassett 1989). There is good reason to believe that these older units may have continued to shape local, intra-regional identities into the 8th century and beyond (Gardiner 1988: 276). In light of the fact that evidence for reconstructing these entities is primarily retrospective, one must exercise some caution when projecting back the better documented Late Anglo-Saxon administrative framework to illuminate earlier arrangements (Hines 2004). On the other hand, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that this system bears an ancestral relationship to respectively the hundredal geography of Surrey, the rapes of Sussex, and the lathes of Kent which, as John Blair has shown, resolve into a remarkably coherent pattern of similarly-sized territories rotating around the axis of the Weald (Blair 1991: 22, Fig. 8). Whilst elusive, archaeological evidence for these tribal structures is not altogether absent. Extant sections of the '*fullingadic*', a boundary named in a 7th-century charter demarcating the eastern limits of a Surrey territory bordering Sonning, Berkshire, survives as a bank/ditch earthwork in the parishes of Walton-upon-Thames, Shere and Abinger (Blair 1991: 14; Gardiner 1988: 288-9). Of defensive proportions, this feature may very well foreshadow the construction of a series of linear earthworks used to protect the western borders of the Kentish kingdom, a testament to the consolidation of regional power structures in South-East England (Gardiner 1988: 289-90).

## **Rural Settlement**

### ***Early Anglo-Saxon rural settlement***

The archaeological coverage for early Anglo-Saxon settlement in the South-East is very patchy, forming a stark contrast to the profusion of cemetery sites. Of the three counties, Kent is the most poorly served, although the publication of recent excavations in advance of the construction of the Channel Tunnel and Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) and other work on Thanet and in the north of the county promises to contribute significant new information (see Welch 2007: 201-9 for a recent overview). We firstly need to consider why it is that such evidence is so difficult to find. Two contributory factors can be proposed; whilst they are

relevant to the South-East region as a whole, there is good reason to suspect that they are particularly deleterious to site visibility in Kent.

The first factor relates to continuity in the post-Roman trajectory of settlements. Unlike the chalk massif of the South Downs, large swathes of the North Downs of Surrey and East Kent are capped with infertile Clay-with-Flints and thus played a marginal role in early stages of colonisation. This might explain why Kent has very little to offer in the way of classic abandoned settlements of the Sussex and Hampshire chalk – Rookery Hill, Bishopstone, Chalton and Cowdrey's Down (Bell 1977; Millett and James 1983). Evidence suggests that within the kingdom of Kent settlement largely replicated the pattern seen in earlier periods with fluvial arteries dissecting the chalk, the Foothills and Holmesdale (as defined by Everitt [1986]) forming the principal theatres of early colonisation (Short 2006: 85; Welch 2007: 194-5). The result of such continuity is that incipient phases of occupation may often lie undetected below modern village cores - areas not usually subject to archaeological monitoring under PPG16 (Poulton 1987: 207-8). It is usually only by adopting targeted research that these places can be encouraged to break their silence, as demonstrated graphically at Botolphs and Bishopstone, Sussex and Lyminge, Kent (Gardiner 1990; Thomas 2010).

The second factor concerns the character of medieval settlement within the region as a whole. The dominant settlement pattern for a large part of south-east England, particularly its Wealden territories but also other significant pockets of forest, marsh, and infertile Downland, is characterised by scattered farmsteads and hamlets – the 'ancient landscape' of historical geographers (Roberts and Wrathmell 2000: fig. 9, 43-4). Whilst this pattern only comes clearly into view in the better documented post-Conquest era, its foundations were almost certainly laid down in previous centuries as attested by place-name evidence (Lawson 2004; Everitt 1986: 39-40; Brandon 2003: 45-52; Hooke 1995: 103-10). Identifying foci on such a diminutive scale represents a major challenge to archaeologists and consequently the physical character and sequence of early medieval Wealden settlement remains highly obscure.

With such a patchy dataset there has been a tendency to make sweeping generalisations on the character of Anglo-Saxon settlements which are misleading. The first misconception is the impression that sites of contemporary settlements and cemeteries were spatially segregated. Whilst some sites may buck the trend, results gleaned from excavations at Rookery Hill, Bishopstone (Bell 1977), and Highdown, in Sussex (Welch 1983), Eccles and Saltwood in Kent (Detsicas 1976; Diack 2003), and Shepperton, Surrey (Poulton 2002), demonstrate that spaces of the living and the dead frequently marched side by side (Gardiner 1988: 270-1; Welch 1985; Welch 2007: 208-9). The excavation of 'total landscapes', as recently achieved on CTRL sites north of Folkestone, Kent (e.g. Newington; Rady et al. 1989), promises to shed new light on how the relationship between these two domains played itself out in spatio-temporal terms.

The second misconception is that early Anglo-Saxon colonization of the South Downs was restricted to the chalk uplands, a topographical zone which was to become increasingly marginal over the second half of the first millennium AD as the focus of settlement shifted to surrounding vales, chiefly in response to environmental factors (Gardiner 2003: 152; Welch 1985). This view is contradicted by the discovery of sites of early Anglo-Saxon occupation in valley-bottom locales as attested at Botolphs and Itford in respectively the Adur and Ouse Valleys of Sussex (Gardiner 1990; James 2002). Furthermore PPG 16 work brought to attention significant pockets of colonisation lying below the chalk, as, for example, the coastal plain of West Sussex (Chadwick 2006; Priestly-Bell 2006) and the Greensand escarpment (Gardiner 1988: 294; Butler 2000). The situation is clearly more complex than the paradigm of downland decolonization envisaged by the model known as the 'Middle Saxon shift' (Hamerow 1991). Rather, as Rippon suggests, what the evidence instead appears to show is the thinning out of settlement in peripheral locations, and continuity in others (Rippon 2007: 119). Importantly, continuity need not imply static occupation in a single location: glimpses obtained at Selmeston on the Greensand escarpment of Sussex and sites on the Thames gravels in

Surrey, point to organic phases of movement and reconfiguration in the biographical unraveling of Anglo-Saxon settlements (Gardiner 1988: 294; Poulton 1987). Clearly, we need to adopt a more flexible conception of the 5th–9th century landscape acknowledging that the domain and economic activities of Anglo-Saxon settlements could encompass a diversity of topographical and ecological niches (Welch 2007: 208-9; for early and middle Anglo-Saxon subsistence economies in Kent see Murray, 2001, Weir 2001 and Hamilton-Dyer 2001 for Sandtun; Hamilton-Dyer 2009 and Hinton 2009 for Manston Rd., Ramsgate; Grimm and Worley 2011 and Stevens and Smith 2011 for Springhead and Northfleet; Stevens 2006 for Saltwood Tunnel).

Despite being excavated some 30 years ago, Rookery Hill, Bishopstone, still ranks as the only extensively excavated early Anglo-Saxon settlement in the South-East and it is consequently difficult to make general statements about the layout and morphology of sites represented within the region (Bell 1977). Nevertheless, in its fairly diffuse layout of small farm units, its structural repertoire of ground-level post-hole and sunken-featured buildings, and its subsistence economy (Gebbers 1977), Rookery Hill provides many points of comparison with large-scale excavations of early Anglo-Saxon settlements undertaken elsewhere in southern England (see Hamerow 2002: 93-99). It also highlights that the ratio of sunken-featured to ground-level buildings on the chalklands of southern England is much smaller than on comparable settlements colonising gravel, sand and clay geologies north of the River Thames (Welch 1985). Recent archaeological interventions undertaken in advance of road-schemes and infrastructure projects in Kent (including the CTRL) have contributed some important additions to the corpus of Early Anglo-Saxon settlements, although in most cases only fragments of larger-scale settlement complexes have been brought to light: key sites include those at Church Whitfield, near Dover, Manston Road, Ramsgate, and multiple foci excavated north of the Saltwood Tunnel, Folkestone, Kent) and in the Springhead/Northfleet area (Welch 2007: 203-6; Hutcheson and Andrews 2009; Diack 2003; Hardy and Andrews forthcoming; for subsistence activities, see Hamilton-Dyer 2009 and Hinton 2009 for Manston Rd., Grimm and Worley 2011 and Stevens and Smith 2011 for Springhead and Northfleet; Bendrey 2009 and Pelling 2009 for Wainscott Northern By-Pass; the small animal bone assemblages including horse remains from an early Anglo-Saxon inhumation and 10th-11th c. settlement at Saltwood are described in Nicholson and Worley 2006).

The expanded corpus of settlements includes some interesting types of construction which stand apart from the mainstream building traditions of the early Anglo-Saxon period (Hamerow 2002: 46-51); noteworthy here are the wooden ground-sill structures from Mile Oak, Hassocks, East Sussex (Butler 2000: 201, fig. 12) and Dover (Philp 2003). One of the difficulties attending the proliferation of new partially-excavated settlements, is the extent to which sunken-featured buildings found in isolation or in small clusters in such places as Bognor, and Itford Farm, Sussex (Chadwick 2006; James 2002), and various sites north of the Saltwood Tunnel, Folkestone, Kent (Diack 2003) might represent components of larger multi-phase settlements of the type brought to life so vividly at Mucking in Essex (Hamerow 1991). On the other hand, we should also be open to the possibility that a proportion of such sites were genuinely small-scale and isolated, as established archaeologically at Marden, East Sussex, which is reasonably interpreted as a site of seasonal occupation associated with sheep husbandry (Gardiner 2003: 154); the site excavated at Manston Road, Ramsgate, argued to represent an upland settlement of dependent status may fall into a similar category (Welch 2007: 207-8; Hamilton-Dyer 2009 on animal remains shows that resource base was narrow, focused on local dry uplands, wetter lowland pasture and inshore and estuarine fishery; see also Bendrey 2009 on the small assemblage of animal remains from middle Anglo-Saxon low status domestic settlement at Wainscott Northern By-Pass; he concludes that wool exploitation would have been an important product and that some seafood was consumed).

### ***Later Anglo-Saxon rural settlement***

Following the national trend, our knowledge of rural settlement patterns between the 8th to 11th centuries is even more attenuated, although better documented regions – the Midlands and East Anglia in particular – can again be called upon to illuminate the local scene (e.g. Jones and Page 2006). These wider comparisons encourage us to interrogate the settlement record as a mirror on Anglo-Saxon society, with key processes such as state formation and growing social complexity, becoming a legitimate focus of study (Reynolds 2003; Wickham 2005: 502-4; Sykes 2004, 2006; Poole 2011 on food, social status and cultural identity). A number of tendencies have been recognised in the physical character of contemporary settlements which reflect directly upon these social transformations. Boundaries as an expression of tighter definition of space linked to growing social constraints and the inheritance of legally-defined property, emerge as a persistent feature, as documented locally at Market Field, Steyning, Shepperton, Surrey, and the 8th-9th-century settlement excavated at Wainscott, on the Medway near Rochester (Gardiner 1993; Canham 1979; Poulton 2002; Clark et al. 2009). With this development comes greater permanence and stability in location, reflected in the use of single house-plots over successive building generations and a greater range of ‘service structures’ such as pits, wells and latrines, as attested at Bishopstone, Sussex and Monkton, Kent (Gardiner 2000a: 170-4; Thomas 2010; Pratt forthcoming).

Against these broad social trends, we should also be sensitive to expressions of a distinct regional cultural identity shaped by the geographical cohesion outlined in the introduction. It remains to be seen how closely settlements in the South-East compare with the incipient phases of classic nucleated villages documented in the so-called ‘Central Province’ of England (Jones and Page 2005; Blair 1991: 56). In a region largely characterised by a dispersed settlement pattern (Everitt 1986; Blair 2005: 421), it is perhaps only in pockets of early colonisation with relatively high Domesday populations - the Sussex coastal plain, the Thames gravels, stretches of the scarp-foot of the North Downs and the Holmesdale of Kent - which might, if better understood, begin to display points of contact with the Midland evidence.

Settlement characterisation is an ever-present issue in a period with very uneven historical documentation: such distinctions as, for example, what constitutes a monastery with an attached farm as opposed to a magnate residence with an attached church, have and continue to stimulate intense debate (Loveluck 2001; Hines 1997: 390–1). This debate has been rehearsed *in extenso* for places such as Flixborough and Brandon outside the region, but, as shown by the controversy surrounding the identity of 7th-to-10th-century occupation discovered within the south-west quarter of the Roman shore-fort of Dover, the issue is equally relevant to the South-East region. The excavator’s hypothesis that this occupation is to be identified with the 7th-century monastic foundation of St Martin’s hinges on the identification of a large east-west timber building (partly superimposed by the Norman edifice of St-Martin-Le-Grand) as a church (Philp 2003). This interpretation has important implications, for, if correct, it would not only provide us with a unique timber version of the otherwise exclusively masonry churches of 7th-century Kent, but also one of our first glimpses of a pre-Viking monastic complex in South-East England, in this case furnishing a range of ground level timber halls and sunken-featured buildings similar in character to urban occupation from Canterbury. However, on the basis of its structural similarities to vernacular timber buildings of the period, notably those excavated at Cowdrey’s Down, Hampshire, Welch has argued that the Dover ‘church’ may alternatively be a royal hall comparable in scale to the focal structures at the Northumbrian palace of Yeavering (Welch 2007: 203).

A number of Sussex excavations – Market Field, Steyning, Old Erringham and Bishopstone – have captured medieval settlements at an embryonic stage of development in the form of nuclei representing royal *vills*, minster churches and/or manorial residences (Gardiner 1993; Holden 1980; Thomas 2009; 2010). In some cases similar centres can be inferred from metal-detected evidence (Thomas 2003), although sites in the South East are rarely as informative as the so-called ‘Productive Sites’ of eastern England characterised by extremely rich

concentrations of ornamental metalwork and coinage (Pestell and Ulmschneider 2003). In this respect, the South-East looks to the west and the heartlands of the West Saxon kingdom where such sites are spread relatively thinly across the landscape and where, typically, the volume of individual finds can be counted in the 10s as opposed to the 100s – a pattern reflected in the metalwork assemblages produced from excavated settlements of the same period (Ulmschneider 2000). The explanations for this regional distinction in the consumption of metalwork in later Anglo-Saxon England remain to be fully explored, but it has important implications for assessing settlement status and hierarchy. Indicators other than the consumption of coinage and fine metalwork must be brought into the equation in order to assess social status, including (where available) the layout and architecture of settlements as well as diet and other patterns of economic consumption (Gardiner 2007: 171-4; Loveluck 2001; for food remains see Hinton 1993, O’Shea 1993, Market Field, Steyning). For example, analysis of the large animal bone assemblage recovered from Bishopstone suggests that the site was supplied by food renders from dependent estates (based on herd structure and size diversity in sheep), and that a resident elite was actively exploiting luxury foods – wild birds, marine fish - as a marker of status (Poole 2010; Reynolds 2010).

Under certain conditions these nuclei could stimulate further accretion and the growth of nucleated villages, but the timing and trajectory of this process is highly variable and poorly understood. On the basis of the evidence recovered from Botolphs and adjacent sites, Gardiner (2003: 158) suggests that the pattern of villages in the Adur Valley south of Steyning crystallised around the year AD 1000. Yet scientific dates obtained from articulated animal deposits unearthed in association with the later Anglo-Saxon settlement at Bishopstone, East Sussex, indicates a 9th-century or earlier inception for ‘a pre-village nucleus’, perhaps focused on an independent minster church subsequently absorbed by the South Saxon see around the year c. AD 800 (Thomas 2010). Of course, the sites reviewed are in primary zones of Anglo-Saxon settlement and acculturation, subsequently with high Domesday population densities; village formation was not to touch many parts of the Weald and other marginal areas, including infertile tracts of Downland, until the 12th century and later (Gardiner 1988: 339; Blair 1991: 64-5).

As in other parts of Anglo-Saxon England, our understanding is dominated by the upper end of the settlement hierarchy: sites with relatively good documentary coverage which advertise themselves either through the quantity and quality of their material culture or through their spatial proximity to extant Anglo-Saxon churches. We know correspondingly little about the character of run-of-the-mill settlements inhabited by low ranking peasants and slaves attached to royal and subsequently lord’s estates. An important local addition is the site recently excavated at Chestfield near Whistable on the north coast of Kent (Allen 2004). Located on an important transportation route leading from the coastal marshes to the swine pastures of the Blean and Canterbury beyond, it comprised a series of ditched animal pens dated to between c. 850-1150. The sparseness and quality of the finds indicate an isolated and impoverished community, but one which was fully integrated into the economic fabric of the locality characterised by the transhumance of swine, salt-extraction and the exploitation of seafood. Further Kentish counterparts to the agricultural ‘producer’ settlements epitomized by Riby Cross Roads, Lincolnshire, and West Fen Road, Ely, Cambridgeshire, have recently been brought to light nearby at Wainscott and Herne (Anon 2002a; see Bendrey 2009 for evidence for wool production at Wainscott and consumption of seafood, plausibly from the Medway estuary and Pelling 2009 for the shift of cereal production to barley and rye). The HS1 excavations revealed early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, which included a horse burial in an inhumation and a 10th-11th century small rural settlement at Saltwood (Nicholson and Worley 2006); the small assemblage of animal bones from the early medieval settlement suggests a focus on sheep husbandry, cattle and pig while the fish bones dominated by cod, flatfish and other marine species reflect the wider expansion of off-shore fishing.

## ***Burials, Belief and Religion***

### ***Early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries***

For a long period the archaeology of the early medieval period in South-East England centred exclusively on furnished burials. With their seemingly insatiable appetite for barrow digging, early antiquarians like James Douglas and Bryan Faussett - pioneers in the field of Anglo-Saxon mortuary archaeology - ensured that the South-East, and Kent in particular, held centre stage in awakening understanding of the Anglo-Saxon way of death. The region's burial record includes some of the most spectacular objects to survive from Anglo-Saxon England, the iconic Finglesham buckle and the Kingston brooch to name but two (Webster and Backhouse 1991: 22, fig. 2; 50, cat no. 32a), and some of the most extensively excavated cemeteries, with Alfriston, Sussex (Welch 1983: 347-87), Finglesham (Hawkes and Grainger 2006) Buckland, Dover (Evison 1987), and St Peter's Tip, Broadstairs, Kent (Richardson 2005: 13-14), each having in excess of 200 burials (Riddler 2004a: 26).

With over 200 recorded cemeteries and burial sites from Kent alone, this remains by far the most conspicuous testimony to Anglo-Saxon settlement in the region (Riddler 2004a; Richardson 2005). The resource is also continually expanding, as testified by the steady accumulation of new sites brought to light through PPG 16 work across the South-East from Westhamptnett in the West to Margate in the East, with a multitude of discoveries in between (Fitzpatrick 1997; Parfitt 2006; e.g. Chartham, Kent, Anon 2004a). Designing a strategy for archiving and disseminating cemetery data in a form receptive to evolving research questions and approaches, particularly scientific techniques such as isotope analysis, represents a major challenge. Yet it is one that we must confront head on if the potential of this resource as a window on Anglo-Saxon society is to be fully realised. The recent launch of the *Novum Inventorium Sepulchral*, a digital resource based upon the archives of Kentish barrow cemeteries excavated in the 18th and 19th centuries, provides a model by which the backlog of unpublished cemeteries could be made available in a format useful to members of the public and serious researchers alike: <http://web.arch.ox.ac.uk/archives/inventorium/>

Many now subscribe to the view that Anglo-Saxon burials should be read as complex, multi-layered performances combining expressions of contemporary ideology, commemorative ritual and cultural (social and/or ethnic) identity; to what extent these acts were structured by a heterodox set of beliefs loosely termed 'paganism', is open to question (Lucy 2000: 174-181; Williams 2006). Marked cultural distinctions, expressed most strongly in classes of female jewellery, particularly brooch forms, have been noted in South-East England with the River Medway in Kent forming a clear cultural fault-line across the region. Whereas cemeteries to the east draw upon mixed impulses from the Merovingian Frankia and Scandinavia in the signalling of a distinctive 'Kentish' identity (Yorke 1984: 15; Richardson 2005: 14; Welch 2007: 223), those to the west display strong affinities with the Upper Thames and the wider 'Saxon' cultural sphere embracing both Surrey and Sussex (Hines 2004: 92; Richardson 2005: 29-30; Welch 1983: 173-4; Welch 2007: 209 and 223).

Simplistic notions that these cultural differences relate to monolithic ethnic groups of 'Jutes' and 'Saxons' must now be firmly rejected. In Kent, the cultural diversity which comes to define the grave assemblages of the 6th and 7th centuries is already apparent in the first-generation cemeteries of the 5th century (Welch 2007: 211-12). The persistent 'Jutish' strand is but one of a multiplicity of influences (also drawing upon Saxon, Frisian and Frankish impulses) bearing witness to the fluid cultural geography of the Anglo-Saxon ethnogenesis and to the role that sustained contacts with the continental homelands had in shaping an evolving Kentish identity (Richardson 2005: 250-1; Welch 2007: 214-5 and 218). The following quote, implicitly acknowledging the conception of ethnicity as a 'situational' construct, neatly encapsulates current thinking on the subject:

*There was probably an underlying tradition of a Jutish origin for key members of what emerged as the Anglo-Saxon elite in east Kent. This Jutish identity was then expanded to provide a focus for the social and political unification of what was to become its kingdom in the 6th century (Welch 2007: 219).*

Similar conceptions are equally relevant to Sussex and Surrey.

As a result of its large volume, the region's cemetery data has enjoyed prominence at the cutting edge of Anglo-Saxon mortuary studies. Key sites, old and new, have been used to examine how aspects of social identity (whether related to status, age or gender) were expressed in the grave both in the treatment of the corpse and the deposition of grave furnishings (e.g. Evison 1987; Høiland-Nielsen 1999; Brookes 2007b). With an enviable corpus of cemeteries excavated on a large scale, sites within the region have also been instrumental in developing new approaches to understanding Anglo-Saxon social structures at a community level and their transformation over time (Welch 1983: 188-217; Härke 1997; Richardson 2005: 210-48; Welch 2007: 227-31). Moreover, the wealth of cemetery data from the region continues to stimulate fresh approaches and re-evaluations serving to heighten its potential as a research tool. Brookes' recent study identifying a class of 'pseudo-boat' burial peculiar to East Kent serves as a salutary reminder of the need to re-visit the cemetery data with fresh eyes (Brookes 2007b). Another dimension to Anglo-Saxon burial traditions and one worthy of further investigation includes the burial of animals or part animals. The horse burial discovered during the HS1 excavations of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery north of Saltwood represents "the most southerly with only three other burials containing horse's heads found in south east England" (Nicholson and Worley 2006: 21, quoting Pestell 2001: 257). There is also significant potential for enhancing the existing resource by grounding the cemeteries in their contemporary landscape context, looking at how sites of burial were used to inscribe meaning in the landscape through their association with prehistoric monuments, prominent route-ways and territorial boundaries (Brookes 2007c; Semple 2007).

### ***Pagan religion in the Anglo-Saxon landscape***

Inspired by the lead taken by Scandinavian colleagues, Anglo-Saxonists are becoming increasingly attuned to evidence for ritual activity in the early medieval landscape, in particular sites which appear to display long-term cultic significance. The major distinction between England and Scandinavia in this regard is that burials, not votive deposits, provided the key outlet for ritual expression in Early Anglo-Saxon England (Hines 1997; Crawford 2004).

Inspiration for rethinking existing datasets in such terms has been provided by Semple's recent reassessment of the meaning and significance of place-names containing the Old English element '*hearg*', interpreted variously as a 'pagan temple' or 'hilltop sanctuary', of which Harrow Hill in West Sussex is a notable example (Semple 2007). Famous for its Neolithic flint mines, the topographically prominent site of Harrow, like other English *hearg* sites, exhibits an extended sequence of ritual activity peaking in the Iron Age and Roman periods, when there is evidence for collective gatherings and repeated feasting. A post-Roman sacral connection is attested by two Anglo-Saxon primary and secondary barrow cemeteries, the siting of which was perhaps triggered by relict features that 'served to attract and draw repeated votive or religious activity and sustain local memories of long-lived spiritual significance' (ibid.: 384). The origins of Lewes in the centuries before its establishment as a Late Saxon *burh* may also stem from its status as a centre of pagan worship. For the historic core of that town appears to be focussed upon a highly conspicuous alignment of Romano-British barrows (two of which were re-utilized as mottes in the construction of the Norman castle), enshrined in the Old English place-name element '*hlāw*' (= 'tumulus/artificial mound') (Bleach 1997).

A further territorial block which has been examined from a ritual perspective is the potential focus of an Anglo-Saxon Woden cult identified in respect of a cluster of wealthy 6th-century cemeteries in the ambit of Woodnesborough (Old English = 'Woden's mound') (Behr 2000). A

number of the female graves excavated within the cemetery complexes at nearby Eastry and Finglesham have yielded gold bracteates of Scandinavian inspiration bearing Woden symbolism. According to Behr (2000), these women of aristocratic status (the forerunners of royal abbesses who founded Kentish double monasteries in the 7th century) subscribed to a religious ideology which invoked strong ancestral links to a mythic Scandinavian homeland.

### ***Christianity and the conversion***

#### ***The burial record***

The so-called 'conversion-period' burials of South-East England, of which there is an impressive corpus (Geake 1997; Lucy 2000: 181-4), provide a vivid illustration of the paradox lying at the heart of debates over the impact of Christianity on Anglo-Saxon attitudes towards death and dying. On the one hand, we are presented with classic examples of what used to be termed 'final-phase' cemeteries – Polhill (Philp 2002) and Broadstairs, Kent (Richardson 2005: 13-14) and Appledown 2, Sussex (Down and Welch 1990) – which document a decline in the deposition of grave-goods seen nationally (Geake 1997). On the other we have the lavishly furnished graves frequently marked out conspicuously under barrows, classic examples being Gally Hills, Surrey (Barfoot and Price-Williams 1976) and Gilton, Kingston Down, and Sarre, Kent (Richardson 2005: 2; 45; 70-1), recently joined by the spectacular coffined graves found at Saltwood (Diack 2003; Welch 2007: 234-5). The latter group might well be read as a direct proclamation of pagan identity if it were not for the fact that several are buried with objects bearing obvious Christian iconography (Crawford 2004).

In the past, these two expressions of mortuary behaviour were interpreted in explicitly religious terms: 'final-phase' cemeteries as places of burial for first-generation converts, in their turn superseded by consecrated churchyards, and wealthy barrow burials as elite statements invoking the symbolism of the new Christian faith. Such interpretations have since been challenged on a number of grounds as academic consensus has shifted to other causal factors rooted in social, political and cultural developments of the 6th-8th centuries (Geake 1999; Crawford 2004). However one wants to interpret such burial evidence in purely ideological terms, it is impossible to divorce these developments from the impact of external influences on the cultural attitude and social mores of local elites, as demonstrated clearly by the continental inspiration behind new art-forms such as Style II in 7th-century Kent (Høiland-Neilsen 1999).

The view that there was a swift transition to the use of consecrated churchyards has also been subject to critical re-evaluation in recent years (Lucy and Reynolds 2002; Hadley 2002, 2007). During the earliest generations of Christianity *ad sanctos* burial within or around churches was a privilege reserved for kings, queens, abbots and monastic *familia*. As the first of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms to be converted, Kent contains the earliest identified church burials to survive in England including those of the Kentish royal family and of St Augustine and his immediate successors, housed within the *porticus* of SS Peter and Paul, St Augustine's, Canterbury (Gem 1997). As attested by historical sources, the role of royal mausoleum was continued by the later foundation of St Mary, ensuring that St Augustine's maintained its status as the principal dynastic burial ground for the Kentish kings until the kingdom's collapse in the 760s (Gem 1997: 101; Welch 2007: 238-9). By granting Augustine land outside the city walls for the establishment of his missionary headquarters, King Aethelbert was consciously evoking comparisons with the extra-mural funerary basilicas of his Frankish peers who he turned to for a model for Christian kingship (Cambridge 1999: 226). The two wealthy female burials of the late 6th and mid 7th centuries respectively represented in the St Martin's 'hoard', testifies to the fact that the Frankish custom of *ad sanctos* burial with lavish grave-goods was similarly absorbed within the orbit of the Kentish royal court (Webster and Backhouse 1991: cat. no. 5).

Ecclesiastical institutions outside diocesan capitals could also be appropriated as royal burial chapels, frequently posthumously. One class were the so-called 'double monasteries' placed under the rule of royal abbesses in Kent (Rigold 1961; Gardiner 1988: 315). As brought to life

so vividly by the pre-Conquest traditions enshrined in the St Mildreth legend (Rollason 1982), institutions such as Minster-in-Thanel and Lyminge clearly capitalized upon the relics of their founding abbesses to promulgate vibrant cults. Yet it is worth noting that the latter - with a suspiciously early foundation date preceding by over a generation the main phase of royally-endowed monastic foundation - may have started life as a royal mausoleum in a similar vein to Ss Peter and Paul, Canterbury (Kelly 2006). Royal burial also served to buttress the territorial claims of the West Saxon kingdom following its eastward expansion during the 9th century (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 177, note 78); this provides the most likely context for the minster at Steyning being appropriated as the final resting place of King Aethelwulf of Wessex (d. 858) (Blair 1997). In all the above cases, however, the evidence for royal interment is exclusively documentary.

The archaeological evidence for monastic burial-grounds is locally very meagre. A small group of unmarked pre-Conquest burials, heavily intercutting and badly disturbed by later building works, was unearthed during two interventions to the south of the abbey church of St Augustine's, Canterbury (Saunders 1978: 30-2; Sherlock and Woods 1988: 81-2). Associated artefacts suggest that a proportion of this evidently lay population could have been buried with grave-goods in the manner of conversion-period burials discussed above, but the evidence is equivocal; otherwise coffins, shrouds and internal grave-furnishings including head-stones are attested. A number of graves were also discovered in 1960 in the vicinity of the south wall of the nave of Rochester Cathedral, on the site of the Anglo-Saxon see founded in AD 604. As with St Augustine's, the significance of associated finds of an Anglo-Saxon spearhead, pottery and clench-nails is uncertain as they were not recovered *in situ* from graves (Meaney 1964: 134-5; Geake 1997: 165).

More recently small-scale excavations to the north of Minster Abbey, Sheppey, on the site of Sexburgh's foundation of AD 664-679, produced a total of 50 graves in an area subsequently occupied by 12th-century buildings. The cemetery is dated on stratigraphic grounds to between the 7th and 9th century on the basis that some of the later graves were found sealed below a cobble foundation associated with extant fabric from the Anglo-Saxon church. As with St Augustine's, a mixed population is represented including burials with stone linings and head supports (Philp and Chenery 1998: 8-12, figs. 5, 6, 7 and 14). Less certainly pre-Conquest are the two groups of unaccompanied inhumations, in both cases cutting Roman levels of the *Classis Britannica* shore-fort of Dover, possibly relating to the 7th-century foundation of St Martin's (Philp 2003: 131-2).

Our knowledge of burial rites practised by the bulk of the Anglo-Saxon populace between the 8th and the 10th centuries is very sketchy because we are reliant upon costly radiocarbon determinations to date them securely. Minster churches, the sole arbiters of pastoral care prior to the 10th century, would have formed an important focus for burial (Blair 2005: 228-45; Hadley 2002, 2007). However, with so few opportunities for excavation within 'living' churchyards, it is hardly surprising that this source forms a particularly elusive strand of the burial record. The presence of pre-Conquest 'deviant' burials (characterised by prone, decapitated, multiple, and hand-tied individuals) at both Staines and Steyning, both sites of Anglo-Saxon minsters, may be a reflection of the judicial role played by the church in the ordeal ritual (Blair 1997; Hayman and Reynolds 2005: 242 and 251), but the hand of secular authority cannot be discounted since both these places emerged as royal boroughs during the Late Saxon period. Depending upon how one characterises its historical origins, the group of forty or so inhumations excavated in close proximity to (though outside the present churchyard of) the Anglo-Saxon church of St Andrew, Bishopstone, Sussex, may represent the first securely-dated burials from a south-east minster. High-precision radiocarbon dates returned from a sample of seven burials span the second half of the 7th to the second half of the 9th century, interestingly showing that burial on this site was potentially initiated before the historically-attested conversion of the South Saxon kingdom by Wilfred (Thomas 2010). Whilst undated, the two charcoal burials found under the chapel crypt of the important and early

minster of Holy Trinity, Bosham, West Sussex in 1981 may be further examples (Aldsworth and McCann 1984), as might the two pillow-stone burials, one with charcoal and 'ear-muffs', and the other placed on a wooden bier, discovered in association with pre-Cluniac activity below the infirmary chapel of Lewes Priory (Lyne 1997: 20-1).

Many would now argue that a significant quantity of the lay population of this period were buried in 'field cemeteries', sites of burial located away from minster churches and in some cases also from contemporary settlements (Blair 2005: 244-5 and 463-71; Hadley 2007; Lucy and Reynolds 2002), of which Eccles in Kent may be cited as a probable local example (Geake 1997: 163; Richardson 2005: 40). There is also the phenomenon of isolated burials on settlements, part of a widespread north-west European phenomenon, but which is as yet undocumented within the South-East (Hadley 2007).

It was only during the 10th century that the majority of the populace started to be buried in the graveyards of proprietary churches in response to tighter regulatory control by the church and the erosion of the monopoly on burial previously held by minsters (Blair 2005: 463-71). As revealed by excavation, the mechanisms which would see the parochial churchyard become an integral element of village communities were various; in some cases proprietary churches were implanted within existing field cemeteries and in others the churchyard is clearly a secondary addition presumably after the church had gained burial rights (Lucy and Reynolds 2002). Again, local evidence for proprietary church burials is very fragmentary: the two unaccompanied east-west orientated inhumations within the Late Saxon manorial curia sampled at Old Erringham, West Sussex, may stand as one of the very few examples (Holden 1980: 270).

Another trend seen in the burial record of later Anglo-Saxon England (one intimately connected with the growth of state machinery across the countryside) is the emergence of a network of sites associated with judicial execution (Reynolds 1999: 96-110). The South-East contains some of the best excavated examples of the thirty or so execution cemeteries recorded nationally, including a cluster of five from Surrey recently synthesized by Reynolds (Hayman and Reynolds 2005). Sites such as London Road, Staines, where burial is attested from the 8th to the 12th century, follow the national trend in being located on administrative boundaries, particularly of Hundreds, and in having a high incidence of 'deviant' burials. The strong correlation between the siting of execution cemeteries and centres of civil administration is also manifested in the discovery of deviant burials at Late Saxon burhs – Eashing and Burpham being clear examples (ibid.: 251).

### ***The Anglo-Saxon church***

From an archaeological perspective, the Anglo-Saxon church in South-East England has suffered a poor track record of research, recording and excavation, and a considerable investment needs to be made if this most evocative of legacies is to be rehabilitated. The structural history of many key monuments of early English Christianity, including the group of early churches standing at the head of the Kentish church, remains ambiguous due to a lamentably poor legacy of excavation and publication (Welch 2007: 240-1). In some cases, as at Reculver (Gem 1997: 105-7), the primary evidence has been lost through acts of demolition amounting to vandalism. In others, as at Lyminge, the evidence from Victorian excavations is so problematic that major re-excavation is required to make sense of ambiguities (Cambridge 1999). Additionally, because previous attention has been myopically focused on the cult foci of early religious foundations – St Augustine's included – we have little or no understanding of the wider layout and organisation of the monastic complex as can now be demonstrated at a number of excavated *comparanda* from Northumbria (see Blair 2005: 191-204). Against this, some notable opportunities have arisen for excavating Anglo-Saxon church fabric to modern archaeological standards, most spectacularly in the nave of Christ Church Cathedral, Canterbury (Blockley et al. 1997). The region has also benefitted from some informative syntheses including those by Blair (1991) on Surrey, Tatton-Brown (1988) on east Kent,

Rushton (1999) on Sussex and Tweddle et al. (1995) on pre-Conquest sculpture; where appropriate, this work has taken the opportunity to update and refine the entries appearing in Taylor and Taylor's magisterial corpus, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture* (1965).

In terms of assessing the distinctiveness of the South-East's architectural heritage, the aforementioned group of churches founded during and immediately after the Augustinian mission to Kent must take centre stage (for most recent discussion see Cambridge 1999). Evidence of varying quality and completeness has been recovered from a total of nine of these 7th-century structures (ten if Bradwell-on-Sea, Essex, founded under Kentish influence, is included; the evidence for an eleventh, the 7th-century foundation of St Martin's, Dover, is contested). Five come from the city of Canterbury, from west to east, the recently-excavated western portion of the Anglo-Saxon cathedral of Christ Church; within the monastic complex of St Augustine's, SS Peter and Paul, St Mary, and St Pancras; and lastly St Martin's, on the testimony of Bede and surviving fabric, a private oratory reutilising a Late Roman building (Gem 1997). The remainder include the cathedral church of St Andrew, Rochester, and Reculver, Lyminge, and Minster-in-Sheppey (Cambridge 1999). Displaying a number of family resemblances including diminutive dimensions, apsidal chancels (in some cases entered through triple arcades) and flanking porticus, these churches have long been regarded as a distinctive group, conceived as the work of continental masons adapting imported traditions of church building to meet the needs of the fledgling English church (Ferne 1983: 32-39). However, Cambridge (1999) has mounted an attack on the past tendency to homogenise these churches whereby Reculver is upheld as an archetype for reconstructing the much more fragmentary remains of other sites, as attempted recently in the interpretation of the early masonry foundations uncovered under the nave of Christ Church, Canterbury (Blockley et al. 1997). Drawing attention to a number of architectural distinctions within the group, Cambridge has argued for two distinct phases of church building under the Augustinian mission, the earlier drawing upon Merovingian Gaulish influences and the later, Italianate influences from the imperial capital of Ravenna.

Another persistent theme brought out by these churches is the re-use of Roman building materials. Whilst the recycling of Roman stonework is a widespread practice nationally (Eaton 2000), what distinguishes the South-East – witnessed at St Martin's, Canterbury (Taylor and Taylor 1965: 143; Gem 1997; Ward 2004: 379-82) and Stone-by-Faversham, Kent (Taylor and Taylor 1965: 575-77; Bell 1998: 12, fig. 2C) – is the requisitioning of Romano-British structures or extensive parts thereof as places of worship. It is hardly surprising that this extreme version of recycling has led to problems and controversies in dating, with some examples such as Lydd still dividing academic opinion (Taylor and Taylor 1965: 405-408; Tatton-Brown 1988: 109). Whilst perhaps related to a paucity of local building stone, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that such recycling also had a symbolic basis as a conscious evocation of the imperial roots of the Roman church (Bell 1998; Ward 2004: 382; Carder 2004).

Knowledge of the physical appearance of the older stratum of head minsters outside East Kent is much more uncertain although medieval successors may sometimes provide an indication of their former scale, as, for example, at Farnham and Godalming, Surrey (Blair 1991: 91-109), and Lyminster, Sussex (Gardiner 1988: 316). Usually extant traces are limited to *ex situ* architectural and sculptural fragments (e.g. Kingston, Surrey; Selsey, West Sussex: see Tweddle et al. 1995). Where it exists, excavated information affords only tantalizing glimpses. A case in point is the pre-Cluniac presence attested on the site of Southover Priory, Lewes, established in the 1070s on the site of a wooden structure anciently dedicated to St Pancras. Structural features from an early stone replacement first came to light during excavations under the Norman sacristy in the 1840s, but the records do not allow any definitive statements to be made on its character, more particularly, whether or not it should be interpreted as a burial crypt. A more recent campaign in the 1970s, on this occasion below the infirmary chapel, provided more concrete information. This revealed the chalk-rubble foundations for a structure 8.1m square furnished internally with a vertically-sided shaft over 3m deep. The recovery of a

large assemblage of fish bone from this shaft has encouraged the view that it functioned as a *sacrarium* (Lyne 1997: 15-19; fig. 3).

New discoveries may infrequently come to light as a result of repair and restoration of church fabric, as recently demonstrated at St Andrews, Bishopstone, East Sussex. Here a programme of internal re-rendering/plastering in 2005, led to the discovery that the famous inscribed sundial set into its south porticus (Tweddle et al. 1995: 124-5) is in fact an *ex-situ* blocking of a newly-revealed Anglo-Saxon splayed window, perhaps originally used to light an internal shrine (Thomas 2010). Similar recording campaigns have refined our chronological understanding of other key local survivals including Bosham, Sussex (Tatton-Brown 2006).

Opportunities for excavation within the interior of parish churches, whilst few and far between, have contributed to an understanding of the architectural character of proprietorial churches at the lower end of the ecclesiastical spectrum. Nevertheless interventions at Thomas the Martyr, Pagham (Freke 1980), and St Nicholas, Angmering, West Sussex (Bedwin 1975), serve as a reminder that a high proportion of parish churches (whether recorded in Domesday Book or not) may be superimposed on pre-Conquest foundations of one or more phases (Gardiner 1988: 316-7).

A good majority of extant parish churches in South-East England can trace their origins to an intense period of church building between AD 1050 and 1200. One important factor which conspires against the close dating of early church fabric to one or other side of the Norman Conquest is the persistence of native Anglo-Saxon traditions alongside imported Romanesque ones known as the 'Anglo-Norman' overlap (see Gem 1988; Blair 2005: 411-22). This is not to say that study of these 'overlap' churches has nothing to offer to the student of Anglo-Saxon architecture. Indeed, the geological study of stone types, 'ecclesiastical geology', demonstrates how a shift away from narrow stylistic considerations can help to shed new light on the economic and aesthetic context of these monuments (Potter 2006; 2007; Worssam 2006). As recently attempted in Lincolnshire, a topographic examination of churches as components of settlement plans may also aid an understanding of the social context of their foundation (Everson and Stocker 2006).

## **Towns**

### **Urban beginnings**

Any assessment of urban developments in the South-East must commence with consideration of the re-occupation of major Roman towns including Canterbury, Rochester and Chichester. Of the three, Canterbury is by far the best understood archaeologically and knowledge of this period is destined to receive a further significant boost when the post-excavation programme of the Whitefriars excavation is brought to publication (Bennett et al. 2003). Anglo-Saxon occupation at Canterbury is first attested from the mid-5th-century when sunken-featured buildings and other activity largely indistinguishable from the contemporary rural scene colonised the decaying remnants of the town's Roman infrastructure; settlement on this scale appears to have continued through until the end of the 6th century (Tatton-Brown 1984: 5-7; Blockley et al. 1995: 463; Welch 2002, 2007: 199). As in the case of London and York, the stimulus for subsequent growth was provided by the implantation of seats of royal and ecclesiastical power; over the course of the next century these foci were to be joined by a market, a mint (the earliest post-Roman mint in existence) and an extra-mural trading quarter located on the River Stour at Fordwich (Tatton-Brown 1984: 5). Whilst archaeological evidence for Anglo-Saxon intra-mural sites has accrued almost continuously since the 1940s, mostly in its south-east quadrant, the most significant synthesis to date remains that based on the Marlowe Car Park excavations responsible for producing three quarters of the 40 or so 5th-7th-century (largely sunken-featured) structures known from Canterbury at the time of publication (Blockley et al. 1995).

The documentary evidence for the 8th and 9th centuries gives the impression of a fairly densely-occupied urban core inhabited by craftsmen and traders but also with intra-mural pockets of agricultural land supplementing more extensive tracts of farmland located immediately outside the city walls (Tatton-Brown 1984: 7). Until recently archaeological evidence could add little to this historically derived picture of Mid Saxon Canterbury, material witness being dominated by coins, pottery (with evidence for the establishment of an industry c. 775-780), and other portable artefacts often recovered from residual contexts (Blagg 1995: 21). New discoveries, however, are beginning to brighten this rather gloomy picture.

Within the walls we may count a possible 8th-century post-built structure from 68-69a, Stour St (Bennett 1980: 409) and another of late 9th-century date (S28), possibly used as a smithy, from the Marlowe Car Park (M1) excavations – two of the few ground-level structures identified from Anglo-Saxon Canterbury (Blockley et al. 1995: 351-4). Of even greater interest is a growing body of evidence for extra-mural settlement on the eastern and north-eastern side of the town (Welch 2007: 245). This includes a series of sunken-featured buildings and associated pits dated to between AD 700 and 1000, recently uncovered at Market Way, St Stephen's (Rady 1999; Anon. 2002b), and the portion of what appears to be suburban ribbon development at St Gregory's Priory, Northgate, represented by rubbish pits, timber-lined wells and property boundaries (Hicks and Hicks 2001: 382). There is also an increasing body of evidence for the existence of an Anglo-Saxon royal *vill* at St Martin's which has been hypothesized as falling within the western extremity of the documented trading settlement of Fordwich, although much more evidence is required to confirm this supposition (Rady 1987; Anon 2004b). Evidence for the diet of the inhabitants has also been retrieved from those Canterbury sites (Pelling 1999; Davis forthcoming).

Significantly less is known about Rochester and thirty years on from a previous assessment (Tatton-Brown 1984: 12-16) it still claims the title of one of England's most poorly documented Anglo-Saxon towns. Located on the bridging-point of the River Medway, the basic elements for urban take off – a highly strategic location on navigable water, seats of both royal and ecclesiastical administration, a market and a mint – were clearly in existence by the 9th century. A population of some size is also implied by the entry of 885 in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* recording a Viking siege equating to a major offensive operation (Swanton 1997: 79). Apart from limited discoveries associated with the Anglo-Saxon cathedral and some scraps of evidence dating to the 9th century (Gardiner 1988: 307), the task of reconstructing post-Roman Rochester remains a largely topographic exercise (Tatton-Brown 1984: 12-16; Brooks 2006).

Evidence for the re-occupation of Roman Chichester is equally scanty and it lacks the pre-Viking period documentation of its Kentish counterparts. Physical testimony is restricted to a single sunken-featured building excavated at East Pallant (Wilson 1951), sherds of Middle Saxon pottery recovered from residual contexts and some unstratified metalwork of 9th-century date (Munby 1984; Jervis 2009: 62). However, the walled town was possibly colonised by an ecclesiastical community during the 8th century in the form of the minster church of St Peter, later to be subsumed within the body of the Norman cathedral when the see was moved from Selsey in 1075 (Kelly 1992); it has been suggested that the *familia* of the latter may have held a permanent place of refuge within the walled circuit before the historically-attested Viking raid of 894 (Munby 1984; Kelly 1992: xxviii, note 3). Given that central-place functions could be spread across multiple foci in the later Saxon landscape, it has also been suggested that the walled refuge formed one component of a wider hinterland including the bishopric at Church Norton, Selsey, and a trading installation on the coast, though it remains to be seen whether this was located, as Munby has proposed, at Pagham harbour (Munby 1984; Gardiner 2003: 152-3).

The 8th century witnessed a boom in international trade in Northern Europe. One of its most striking manifestations is the so called coastal *wics*, a class of settlement specialising in trade

and artisan production which sprang up around the shores of the English Channel, the North Sea littoral and the Baltic (Scull 1997; Hill and Cowie 2001). Celebrated for their scale and urban attributes – dense occupation, planned layouts, metalled streets, economic provisioning, and wide repertoire of craft production – these phenomena are seen by many as manifestations of royal power: centres where the importation of foreign goods could be controlled, taxed and redistributed to the benefit of the state. How does the South-East fit into the picture? While Sandwich and Fordwich in Kent have been compared to Middle Saxon Southampton and Ipswich on onomastic and historical grounds, there are hints that their physical character may be somewhat different (Biddle 1976; Tatton-Brown 1984: 16-22). It has been argued that much of the wealth and political status of the 7th-century kingdom was based upon its monopoly over the importation and redistribution of luxuries obtained from Frankia (Huggett 1988; Welch 2007: 223-7). However this incoming traffic appears to have been funnelled through a number of coastal and estuarine sites located with respect to imported luxuries deposited in nearby cemeteries – Buckland, Dover, Sarre, and Faversham (Hill and Cowie 2001; Brookes 2007a). It may well be that this rather diffuse network of smaller centres persisted into succeeding centuries with the obvious addition of new sites under monastic control, as attested by the toll remissions granted to Minster-in-Thamet and Reculver (Kelly 1992). In the case of Sandwich, this may be borne out by the discovery of sherds of Ipswich ware pottery in the vicinity of Sandwich Castle well outside the core of the medieval town thought to lie directly above its Anglo-Saxon predecessor (Hill and Cowie 2001: 102).

Much more apparent within our region is a sub-stratum of commercially active sites which operated at a localised scale (Gardiner et al. 2001; Pestell and Ulmschneider 2003). Despite a history of unsystematic research, the site of *Sandtun*, in the vicinity of the Roman shore-fort of *Portus Lemanis*, in the village of West Hythe, Kent, provides a fairly coherent impression of the character of one of these foci (Gardiner et al. 2001). In existence between the 8th and 10th centuries, the economic vitality of the *Sandtun* community, founded on an outlying estate of the monastic community of Lyminge, rested upon fishing, salt-processing and cross-channel trade, in the latter case most probably fuelled by the Church's requirement for imported wine to celebrate the Eucharist. The animal bone evidence from Sandtun (Murray 2001; Hamilton-Dyer 2001) suggests that wool production and local fisheries may have been a focus of subsistence activities, with processing of salt pork possibly occurring on or off site. Although more equivocal, there are hints of other communities in the *Sandtun* category at Medmerry and Pagham, Sussex (Gardiner 2003: 152).

A further class of Roman site attracting central-place functions in the Anglo-Saxon period because of their ready-made defensibility and strategic location were shore-forts. Dover has already been discussed in relation to ambiguities surrounding the Anglo-Saxon occupation within the South-West sector of the *Classis Britannica* fort. However, one can also now add extra-mural activity in the form of 9th to 10th century deposits within coastal sand dunes excavated to the south of the shore-fort. Interpreted as representing casual, intermittent occupation, this activity may be associated with the site of an annual fair (Hill and Cowie 2001: 95-8). A later Anglo-Saxon presence has also been recorded within the Roman shore-fort of Pevensey (a late Anglo-Saxon port), although an informed assessment must await the publication of key excavations within the defensive circuit. According to a brief summary (Combes and Lyne 1995), occupation spanning the later Anglo-Saxon period is attested. Suggestive of fairly dense occupation allied to the refurbishment of gatehouse defences, this included numerous rubbish and cess-pits producing domestic rubbish and stratified coins of the 9th century.

Finally there are the royal *vills*, estate centres where the royal *fyrð* (food-rent) was collected, whose long-term development was closely linked to the foundation of minster churches. Several of these foci (Guildford, Kingston, Steyning, Milton) developed into fully-fledged or incipient urban centres during the Late Anglo-Saxon period and some make an appearance as royal boroughs in Domesday Book (see below). Kingston-on-Thames, the most extensively

excavated town in Surrey and the place of royal councils and inaugurations during the 9th and 10th centuries, is one of the few local examples to have produced coherent archaeological evidence. Including 9th to 10th century tenement boundaries, pits and stray finds of pottery from Thames Street, Eden Walk and other sites, the evidence suggests a zone of lay activity focused upon the hypothesized royal/minster core in the vicinity of All Saints church (Andrews 2004). Another potential example is Hoo St Werburgh, the site of a religious community since the 7th century taken over as a Mercian power-base when Kent was annexed during the 8th century (Brooks 1984: 183; Welch 2007: 239). A recent watching-brief on a pipeline to the south of St Werburgh's church identified a timber hall set within a two-phase enclosure; finds included iron-smithing debris and, significantly, imported grey-wares dated to the mid 6th to 7th century (Moore 2002) and the diversity of plant remains attested to the combination of continuity and changes in agriculture at this period (Pelling 2002).

### **Later Saxon towns**

#### **Burhs**

The seeds for urban take off were sown at the end of the 9th century when, under sustained pressure from the Viking host, King Alfred instigated one of the most formidable defensive schemes of early English history. This much-debated operation, completed beyond Alfred's lifetime using a remarkable evolving blueprint known as the Burghal Hidage, involved the establishment of a network of garrisoned fortifications known as *burhs* effectively creating a defensive cordon around English territory (Hill and Rumble 1996). Whilst the immediate impact of this scheme as a stimulus for urban growth may have been somewhat exaggerated in the past (see Astill 2000: 34-8), it certainly provided momentum by applying a centrifugal force over the spatial setting of commercial, administrative and productive activity. The Burghal Hidage conveniently provides a listing of these sites for us: starting on the eastern border of Sussex with the contested site of *Eorperburnan*, possibly Newenden in Kent or over the border at Rye (Brooks 1964: 81-6; Kitchen 1984; Hill and Rumble 1996: 201-2), followed by Hastings, Lewes, Burpham, and Chichester; and for Surrey, *Escingum* (Eashing), and Southwark (Hill and Rumble 1996: Appendix IV). The major omission is of course Kent. Given its strategic position, it is inconceivable that the shire would have been ignored; the only sensible conclusion is that separate provision was made for it on which surviving documentary sources remain obstinately silent (Hill and Rumble 1996: 79-80).

The first factor to point out in considering the archaeology of the *burhs* is that they encompass a diverse range of sites, some making use of pre-existing Roman defences surrounding permanent populations (Chichester) and others exploiting naturally defensible locations, where necessary, augmented with banks and ditches (*Eorperburnan*, Hastings, Lewes, Burpham, Eashing) (Biddle 1976: 120-34). Further diversity is introduced into the equation when it is considered that a number of the above were founded as forts to be garrisoned in times of emergency rather than as permanent settlements (Astill 2006: 240-43).

The second point is that the scheme was subject to continual modifications over the course of the 10th and 11th centuries as successive Kings of Wessex (later England) responded to new threats while exploiting the system as a means to extend royal control over a burgeoning economy (Astill 2006: 236). Thus one sees some of the original temporary burghs replaced by adjacent sites more conducive to permanent settlement, as has been argued for Burpham/Arundel and Eashing/Guildford (Gardiner in Drewett, Rudling and Gardiner 1988: 323). During periods when defence again became a paramount consideration, as under the rule of Athelred II, new sites were brought into commission, as seems (on the basis of numismatic evidence) to have been the case with the Iron-Age hill-fort of Cissbury, West Sussex, for a short period substituting nearby Chichester's role as a mint and market (Stewart 1978: 100-1). A similar impression is given by the short-lived mint at Lympne in Kent, perhaps located within the shore-fort *Portus Lemanis*, before subsidence of the walled refuge forced a re-siting (Brooks 1988: 96-7).

Considerably more work needs to be invested in the burghs of South-East England in order to understand their character and development both as discrete entities and as components of integrated systems of defence. None have yet afforded a glimpse of the evolving layouts and complex defensive sequences recovered at such places as Winchester and Hereford (Biddle 1976: 120-34; Shoemith 1980). In lieu of this physical evidence, past discussion has been dominated by plan-analysis of urban topography as a means of reconstructing the gridded layouts characteristic of Late Saxon towns such as Winchester (Biddle 1976: 124-34). Whilst there is certainly value in this approach, the danger is that organic development is telescoped into a static, two-dimensional image. And the danger is made all the more apparent by studies pointing to the fact that the productive and commercial capacity of *burghs* only really took off in the latter part of the 10th and 11th centuries well after their initial establishment as defensive installations (Blair 2005: 337; Astill 2006: 236). On a more positive note, a more fruitful approach to understanding the true nature of the *burghal* fortifications has recently been formulated under the banner of an inter-disciplinary project based at the Universities of London and Nottingham entitled 'Beyond the Burghal Hidage': <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/project/beyond-burghal/index.htm>. Involving archaeologists and place-name scholars, this work will allow the region's *burghs* to be viewed in their proper landscape context as part of an integrated system embracing communication routes, beacon systems, and private fortifications.

Only two of the region's emergency burhs – *Eorperburnan* and Burpham - have been interrogated archaeologically, both on a small scale and in the latter case with tantalising results which require wider contextualization (Sutermeister 1976; Gardiner 1988: 323). Perhaps the biggest black hole, however, hangs over the larger burhs with lengthy histories ahead of them as shire towns. Archaeological evidence for Late Anglo-Saxon occupation at Chichester, whilst significant in a regional context (providing as it does some key information on its role as a centre of pottery production) tells us little about the fundamental considerations of urban topography and building density (Down 1981: 133-38; Jervis 2009). For Lewes and particularly Guildford the evidence is also very sparse, the location of dated pit sequences providing little more than a broad indication of the extent of Late Saxon occupation (O'Connell and Poulton 1984: 43-6; Rudling 1983; Hill and Rumble 1996: 207-8; Brent 2003: 25-45). In light of this lacuna, the results of recent excavations by Baxter's print-works on the east side of St Nicholas' Lane, Lewes - the first to sample the Late Saxon burgh ditch (together with contemporary pits yielding pottery and a purse of 11th-century coins, as well as a substantial assemblage of animal bones and a moderate one of charred plant remains) - are keenly awaited (Luke Barber pers. comm). It is still too early to say whether Lewes and Chichester were as sparsely inhabited in their nascent phases in the manner of Cricklade and Christchurch (Astill 2006: 245).

In terms of Kent, archaeology has a long way to go if it is to fill the gap left by the county's omission from the Burghal Hidage. Canterbury, which by the mid 10th century had risen to the status of one of the premier urban centres in the country (Tatton-Brown 1984: 7-9), has seen some fundamental excavations at St George's street and other sites (Blockley 1988; Gardiner 1988: 333-5), but until this evidence is brought up to date and published in synthetic form, it is impossible to make informed comparisons with other Late Saxon towns in Wessex and beyond. In light of their strategic position, it is almost certain that Dover and Rochester were brought into commission as garrisoned forts at this time - documentary sources cast limited light on the existence of defences in the Castle Hill area of Dover immediately prior to the Norman Conquest (Tatton-Brown 1984: 23) – but again archaeological evidence is lacking. The recent discovery of Late Anglo-Saxon occupation in the form of a dense area of pitting in the vicinity of The Bayle, Folkestone, indicates that this easily defendable area could have served such a role (David Cross pers. comm.). By extension, serious consideration should be given to the possibility that a wider repertoire of sites with pre-existing defences – notably Iron Age hill-forts – were brought into commission during periods of unrest.

***The growth of an urban hierarchy: Late Saxon small towns and sea ports***

The foundations of an urban hierarchy were laid down in the Late Saxon period with the emergence of a secondary tier of market centres subsidiary to the major shire towns, a process which gathered pace from the late 10th century onwards (Gardiner 2000b: 72; Astill 2000: 38-42). Among them were settlements displaying Middle Saxon roots as royal-vill-minster-church complexes which expanded to near urban status by the end of the Anglo-Saxon period – Milton, Faversham, Steyning. Their ambiguous position is recorded in Domesday Book, for in spite of obvious central-place functions such as mints, ports and markets, they are not accorded the status of boroughs and unlike their larger urban counterparts their populations were primarily involved in agricultural production (Gardiner and Greator 1997; Dyer 2003). With an estimated two per cent of its Saxo-Norman core excavated, Steyning in Sussex has good claim to be one of the best understood examples of a Late Saxon small town in England. Its historical background as a royal minster enriched by the cult of its founding Saint, Cuthman, has been reviewed by Blair (1997), and this early activity may have provided the stimulus for subsequent growth commencing with the establishment of a high status residence to the east of the ecclesiastical precinct. A number of archaeological interventions between the church and the medieval re-planned settlement to its south (Gardiner 1993) have documented Saxo-Norman occupation characterised by low-density, scattered buildings set within spacious tenements rather more akin to contemporary rural settlements than to major urban centres. The assemblage of animal bones indicates a focus on sheep, followed by cattle and pig husbandry, and consumption of domestic and possibly wild birds, as well as organised dumping of waste (Gardiner 1993; O’Shea 1993) including plant remains (Hinton 1993). Imported pottery recovered from these levels shows that the town engaged in trade channelled through the historically documented port of St Cuthman on the Adur. This narrative, complemented by the imposition of a mint in the 1020s, provides a vivid insight into the secularization of a minster settlement as a paradigm of Late Saxon urban development. Reigate, Surrey, which has produced contemporary occupation of a similar character, may well owe its existence to a similar pre-Conquest sequence (O’Connell and Poulton 1984: 47-8)

Other places had a more specific role as Late Saxon sea ports, some, as in the case of Fordwich and Sandwich, replacing the Middle Saxon trading settlements reviewed above (Tatton Brown 1984: 16-22). Due to the greater quantity of documentary sources available for this period, the broad lineaments of this phase of urban development can be reconstructed with a fair amount of confidence. Cross-channel trade provided a major impetus for the growth of ports along the southern and eastern coasts of England during the later 10th and 11th centuries as testified historically by the donation of commercially-strategic coastal estates to Norman abbeys such as Fécamp (Gardiner 2000b: 78-9). By the middle of the 11th century a clear hierarchy of ports had emerged with Dover, Romney, Hythe, Sandwich and Hastings having been accorded rights of jurisdiction in return for providing ships for naval service. The extension of the Cinque Ports nexus to encompass subsidiary ‘limbs’ (a process which only gained full momentum after the Norman Conquest) may have been initiated in the Late Saxon period with the designation of Fordwich as a junior partner to Sandwich (Gardiner 2000b).

Two crucial factors need to be borne in mind when considering the archaeological character of these maritime centres. Firstly, that the location of ports was determined by dynamic geomorphologic change driven by longshore drift and the instability of coastal and offshore shingle barriers (Woodcock 2003). As a result harbours could shift considerable distances within relatively short periods of time. Thus, within a period of as little as 70 years, Lympne, the principal port of trade for the eastern part of the Romney marsh was superseded by its eastern neighbour of Hythe; similar sequences of easterly drift dictated the early development of Shoreham, Seaford, Hastings, Romney and Winchelsea (Tatton-Brown 1984: 23-8; Brooks 1988: 98-100). Whilst the replacement of one harbour by another often created two or more widely spaced foci, some sequences could be played out within a much smaller spatial

compass. This has been shown to be the case on the basis of documentary and cartographic research undertaken on Hastings. Its topography betrays a complex palimpsest comprising a shingle harbour with three additional landing places, one of which – Bulverhythe – may have attained the status of an independent town (Gardiner 1988: 337, 2000b: 88-93).

The second point is that we need to be open to the possibility that the origins of such places may be considerably earlier than their first historical mention. This suspicion is raised by the case of Seasalter (Tatton-Brown 1984; Gardiner 1988: 337). In the Late Saxon period this coastal site clearly functioned as a port of trade for fish, salt and possibly also oysters, but it has been proposed that its roots extend back into the pre-Viking period as the trading centre of 'Harwich' (Baldwin 1992). Archaeological backing for this hypothesis now exists in the form of sherds of Middle Saxon Ipswich ware recovered in association with the excavated portion of a hollow way forming a long-established transportation artery connecting the coastal marshes to the market of Canterbury (Weekes 2002).

### ***Craft, Industry and Domestic Consumption***

In spite of its exposure to continental influences and traditions many aspects of artisanal production in the South-East (with the obvious exception of the production of glass vessels) continued along native and relatively rudimentary lines for the duration of the Anglo-Saxon period. This is well illustrated by local pottery which, even after the emergence of urban based kilns at Canterbury and subsequently Chichester during the Late Saxon period, lagged well behind the superior fast-wheel products of Portchester, Winchester, Thetford, St Neots, Stamford, and York (Gardiner 1990: 251; Riddler 2004b). Whilst some attempt was made to emulate imported Frankish pottery in the 7th and 8th centuries, the likely impetus behind the production of a range of boss-decorated jars and beakers distinctive to East Kent (Gardiner et al. 2001: 222), the technology remained simple and the output small. The importation of East Anglian Ipswich ware attested at a number of coastal and Canterbury sites appears to have had little or no influence on local traditions (Blackmore 2001: 206). In the absence of industrial-scale production, the manufacture and consumption of domestically-manufactured wares remained highly localised. Analysis of the local wares from *Sandtun* indicates production 'from a number of small workshops that sprang from the more self-sufficient family or small community based potting trends of the Early Anglo-Saxon period' (Gardiner et al. 2001: 211-22). This assessment is likely to characterise ceramic production in many parts of the South-East countryside until well into the 12th century.

While broad chronological trends can be observed across the ceramic regions of South-East England – the rise to dominance of flint-tempered fabrics from the 7th century, the introduction of oxidized, wheel-finished cooking pots in a recognisable Saxo-Norman tradition (Gardiner 1990: 251-2; Jervis 2009; Jervis 2010) – there is a need for much more comparative research underpinned by the construction of a comprehensive fabric series covering the South-East counties. The need is made more pressing by the availability of a series of scientifically-dated assemblages from Bishopstone, for example; chronological benchmarks now exist against which other local assemblages within south central Sussex and beyond can be compared and potentially sequenced in absolute terms (Jervis 2010). Like many of the other crafts represented in the South-East during the Anglo-Saxon period, evidence for pottery manufacture beyond the products themselves is very scarce. For the early period there are two antler dies from Botolphs, Sussex (Riddler 1990: 262, fig. 23, nos. 51 and 52). For the later, in addition to the kilns from two sites in Chichester, there are a number of wasters from Bishopstone (Gardiner 2003; Jervis 2010).

A gap in evidence for on-site manufacture also holds true for glass vessel/bead production in 5th-7th-century Kent, a regional industry which, in opposition to pottery, reached a level of sophistication unparalleled elsewhere in Early Anglo-Saxon England. This conclusion largely derives from indirect evidence in the form of the typological study/distribution of glass vessels (with the recognition of several potential Kentish forms: variant forms of 'Kempston', claw, bell

and bag beakers), mostly derived from furnished inhumations, although the corpus has recently been enlarged with material from excavated settlement sites (Guido and Welch 2000; Evison 2000; Stephens 2006). While the case for Kentish production – including the recognition of a potential site of manufacture at Faversham (Stephens 2006: 21-22) - remains convincing, it should be acknowledged that without analytical studies it remains too difficult to distinguish between potential Kentish products on the one hand and continental imports on the other.

### ***Butchery, bone and antler working***

In a recent synthesis, Sykes (2006a) suggests that during the Anglo-Saxon period, butchery was largely a domestic affair, with little evidence of specialisation prior to the mid 10th c. Though the large assemblage from Late Saxon Bishopstone includes axially split vertebrae, butchery is thought to be largely non-standardised (Poole 2010). Sykes (2007) suggests that the sale of meat joints in towns may have been influenced by the Norman elite, though increasing urbanisation and concentration of non-producers would no doubt have stimulated an active meat trade.

Bone and antler working was commonly undertaken during this period, to fashion decorative and functional items (e.g. MacGregor 1991; MacGregor et al. 1999, in Sykes 2007). The presence of red deer skulls with attached antlers, shed antler and antler fragments in sunken featured buildings at Northfleet, Kent may be interpreted as indicating a specialist craft function or alternatively in some may represent a ritual deposit or combination (Grimm and Worley 2011). Elsewhere the presence of horncores, red deer antler and exceptionally whale bone suggests that horn, antler and bone working was practiced though whether on a domestic or more specialist (possibly itinerant) level is difficult to ascertain (e.g. Bishopstone, Poole 2010; Botolphs, Gardiner 1990; Stevens 1990; Sandtun, Murray 2001; Canterbury, Marples 1983; see Sykes 2007 for overview). There is some evidence to suggest that materials changed and intensification of craft working occurred post-Conquest, possibly due directly to Norman influence or through increased urbanisation (Sykes 2007).

In relation to other specialised industries including iron extraction, salt-processing, and fishing, our sources of information are chiefly documentary. Nevertheless, some significant new discoveries have come to light since the field was last surveyed by Gardiner two decades ago (1988: 327-33). With regards to fishing, important assemblages of fish bone have been recovered from Sandtun (Hamilton-Dyer 2001), Bishopstone (Reynolds 2010) and Lyminge (Reynolds 2008) but as yet we still have a very imperfect understanding of the transition from relatively low-level exploitation of inshore species characteristic of the early Anglo-Saxon settlements, as attested at Manston Road, Ramsgate (Welch 2007: 207; Hamilton-Dyer 2009) and Sandtun (Hamilton-Dyer 2001), to the industrial scale catches of herring documented in Domesday Book and post-Conquest assemblages such as Townwall Street, Dover (Darby 1962: 605-7; Nicholson 2006). Our ability to chart this transition rests not only upon more and better dated assemblages but also on dietary studies of Anglo-Saxon populations using isotope analysis. Exceptionally, the fish bone assemblage from late Anglo-Saxon Bishopstone reveals an early “intensification of marine fish consumption” (Reynolds 2010; also Reynolds 2008) not paralleled elsewhere until c. AD 1000 (Barrett et al. 2004). Reynolds (2010) suggests that the chronology of site occupation may have to be extended. Alternatively the data may represent part of wider control of wild resources by the thegnly class and elite consumption in the late Anglo-Saxon period. Interestingly, isotope data from Bishopstone shows no marine component; though this may be due to sampling bias (samples potentially taken from lower class individuals). The fish bone data from the somewhat earlier Middle Saxon site of Lyminge also indicates a concentration on marine fish and may help to elucidate the role of the elite “in initiating the large-scale taste for marine fish” (Reynolds 2008: 3).

With regards to iron smelting, the site of Mersham excavated along the line of the CTRL south-east of Ashford stands as a significant addition to that previously discovered at Millbrook, East Sussex (Tebbutt 1982). Whilst the site of the furnaces were not located within the excavation, their close proximity was indicated by the discovery of fragments of furnace lining in a complex of pits, some of which also yielded diagnostic tap-slag and roasted ore (Willson 1999). Associated occupation and domestic refuse indicates that the site was active between 1050 and 1250 with a possible earlier phase commencing around 850. Located immediately to the south of a church first recorded in 1040, it is interesting to speculate on the historical context of this iron working and whether it represents ecclesiastical provisioning, perhaps for one of the Canterbury houses. In this connection, it may be noted that large quantities of iron working residue were recovered from Middle Saxon pits sampled by the unpublished Christ Church excavations in the outer court of St Augustine's Abbey (Bennett 1990). As attested historically by charters granting iron yielding estates to houses such as St Mary's, Lyminge, Kentish minsters had a stake in the industry's development from at least as early as the 8th century (Blair 2005: 246-87). A sidelight illuminating the production mechanisms associated with the Anglo-Saxon iron industry is also provided by a forging pit discovered at Friar's Oak, Hassocks, Sussex, which shows that the process of converting blooms for sale and redistribution may have occurred at some distance from source (Hodgkinson 2000: 18 Fig. 11 and 41-2).

With the exception of the production of glass vessels and the processing of salt (most recently reviewed by Riddler 2004b: 33), signs of craft specialization beyond the repertoire practiced on self-sufficient rural communities up and down the country – iron smithing, textile manufacture, the production of hones and querns, bone and antler working – is very limited. Again the easternmost of the three counties shows the strongest tendencies in this direction with evidence from the site of Sandtun for the serial production of a type of siltstone spindle-whorl distributed widely across East Kent between the 8th to the 12th centuries (Riddler 2004b).

While there is evidence that the material provisioning of late Saxon rural settlements drew upon a wider geographic orbit than their Early Anglo-Saxon predecessors, supra-regional and continental imports, with the obvious exception of lava quernstones, remain a novelty; accordingly it is rare to find more than a handful of sherds of continental pottery on the average rural site, even those with coastal access (Gardiner 1988: 41; 1990: 255). The analysis of the geological material from Bishopstone, Sussex provides a good illustration of the exchange networks exploited by a late Saxon estate centre situated on the South coast (Barber 2010). Wealden sources figure most prominently (accounting for a third of the total stone assemblage by weight) in the form of several locally procured sandstones appearing in a finished state as querns and hones or else as ballast, no doubt destined for conversion into the above. Coastal trade also played an important supplementary role as indicated by querns made from Hythe Beds Lower Greensand obtained from the Lodsworth region of West Sussex, Ashdown sandstone from the Hastings area, and hones produced from Thanet-type sandstone; the same regional exchange networks are also probably responsible for imported German lava which appears in significant quantities. Coastal traffic along the South coast is also implied by the discovery of spouted pitchers similar to those produced at the Chapel Hill kiln at Chichester which have been found on a number of other sites in south-central Sussex (Gardiner 2003: 57).

As a consequence of the implementation of standard sampling strategies, the number of rural sites with informative faunal and environmental assemblages – Steyning (Hinton 1993; O'Shea 1993), Bishopstone (Poole 2010; Reynolds 2010; Ballantyne 2010), Sandtun (Murray 2001; Hamilton-Dyer 2001), Manston Road, Ramsgate (Hamilton-Dyer 2009; Hinton 2009), Northfleet and Springhead (Grimm and Worley 2011) - is steadily increasing. What is already apparent from the unsynthesized data is the impressively wide resource base exploited by Anglo-Saxon settlements, even those dating back into the 5th and 6th centuries. This point can be illustrated by comparing the economic profiles of Botolphs and Rookery Hill, Bishopstone

(Gardiner 2003: 153-4). Taking advantage of their coastal plain situations, each shows extensive utilisation of Downland, estuary, beach, and Weald; deep water fish species indicate that the latter site also benefited from a maritime dimension. This diversity reflects directly upon the structure of contemporary estates whose viability depended upon combining the resource potential of contrasting environmental zones. While broad patterns of animal husbandry and exploitation have been elucidated through national syntheses encompassing data from the southeast (e.g. Sykes 2006a, 2007; Poole 2011; Holmes 2011), the data from Kent, Sussex and Surrey cannot be slotted easily into particular regimes, chronologically, temporally or by site type. The few available assemblages for the southeast indicate the cattle, sheep and pig husbandry varied in relative importance and focus, indicating that a range of products were produced and consumed. This no doubt will be clarified with forthcoming analyses (e.g. Lyminge, see assessments by Reynolds 2008; Baker forthcoming; Lewes, Ayton forthcoming) and the regional review for Saxon-Post medieval Southern England (Holmes forthcoming).

Key developments in Anglo-Saxon crop husbandry are also documented in local sites. The systematic adoption of free-threshing wheats as the main wheat crop is widely attested, as is the introduction of rye (Stevens 2008, 2011; Pelling 2010; Ballantyne 2010) although the latter is absent or rare at Springhead and Northfleet (Stevens 2011; Smith 2011). The continuity of use of glume wheat in the early Saxon period can also be demonstrated now that secure radiocarbon dates have been obtained as part of recent analyses (Ballantyne 2010; Smith 2011). Somewhat surprisingly, there is no clear evidence for a sharp urban/rural divide in the consumption of crop species. Barley is prevalent on rural sites such as West Malling and Cottington Road on Thanet (Stevens 2009) and Wainscott (Pelling 2009), but is also found on sites in central Canterbury, alongside free-threshing wheat (see Davis forthcoming at Whitefriars, and Carruthers forthcoming at St Augustine's Abbey at Barton Court School). Evidence for other plant-related activities such as crop processing, the fine details of waste disposal or the presence of high status plant food remains such as exotic fruit, is limited in Anglo-Saxon plant assemblages.

Finally, archaeology is starting to provide flashes of detail on agricultural processing, including such discoveries as 6th-century food smoking pits at Gravesend, Kent (Gaimster and O'Conor 2005: 379), corn driers (Stevens 2011) and, rather more spectacularly, the remains of a horizontal watermill found in the vicinity of the Roman villa at Ebbsfleet, Kent, constructed of timber felled in the period AD 689-719 (Welch 2007: 206-7).

## Research Agenda

### ***Introduction***

The archaeological resource for the Anglo-Saxon period in the South-East region is highly variable in quality and coverage. At one extreme one can count the abundant data derived from 5th-7th-century cemeteries which under any estimation must rank as one of the richest sources available for examining culture and society in Early Anglo-Saxon England. In Kent particularly, there is also an impressive range of well documented ecclesiastical sites bearing witness to the key role played by that kingdom in the conversion of Anglo-Saxon England to Christianity. Falling at the other extreme is a dearth of excavated Anglo-Saxon settlements casting a shadow over much of Surrey and West Kent but also significant pockets of East and West Sussex and East Kent. Any Research Agenda for the region must respond to this variability by on the one hand targeting gaps in the resource and on the other by maximising the interpretative potential of existing data-sets through the application of new analytical and theoretical approaches. It needs stating from the outset that to be adequately addressed, many of the agenda items highlighted in this document will require the integration of multiple datasets and specialisms covering documentary sources, place-names, the archaeology of

standing buildings, landscape and environmental archaeology. This aim places a high priority on collaboration between specialists working in different fields, but also between institutional bodies ranging across the professional heritage sector, academic departments and local voluntary groups and organisations. Each of these sectors can make a valuable and distinct contribution towards meeting the overall goal of realising a more in-depth and nuanced understanding of the Anglo-Saxon legacy in South-East England.

The following Agenda is structured around the key themes presented in the Resource Assessment. Each key objective is broken down into a series of specific aims which will form the basis of the implementation strategy.

### ***Romano-British/Anglo-Saxon transition***

This subject needs a fresh, systematic appraisal informed by critical interpretations (e.g. Esmonde-Cleary 1989, 1995; Wickham 2005) of the structural and cultural developments which occurred over the 5th century so that we know where and how to uncover fresh information.

- Harness the potential of the historic landscape to inform an understanding of the Romano-British/Anglo-Saxon transition. This crucial resource has been under exploited in South-East England. Work needs to be focused on the long term evolution of field systems and their environmental context to establish definite cases of continuity in Roman estate boundaries and land use. The potential of palaeoenvironmental studies needs to be maximised by targeting gaps in off-site sequences and by dating existing sequences more closely.
- Implement methodologies for identifying and characterising 5th-century occupation in Roman towns including Canterbury, Rochester and Chichester and coastal sites such as Richborough, and Pevensey. Can existing stratigraphic assemblages, particularly those derived from old excavations, be reassessed to examine this question in a more critical way? Contexts with the highest potential for refined dating, for example, burials from extra-mural cemeteries, need to be integrated into this analysis.
- Reassess the relationship between Roman villas and sites of Anglo-Saxon occupation. The presence/absence of Anglo-Saxon occupation on villa sites needs to be examined systematically across the region taking into account differences in the character of occupation. Combined with a broader landscape perspective, this holds the potential for illuminating regional and localised patterns of continuity in estate/agricultural organisation.
- The relationship between centres of Anglo-Saxon power – royal *vills*/minster settlements – and the Romano-British inheritance needs to be examined critically. Everitt's thesis (1986) that continuity from the Roman period was strongest at royal estate centres/minster settlements needs to be tested archaeologically.
- Deepen an understanding of the social and ethnic identity of 5th-century populations. The burial data is particularly suited to exploring the major topic of cultural identity and ethnicity during this period. We need to begin to utilise this evidence scientifically to determine population movement (stable isotopes) and to examine what effects this cultural transition had on such factors as diet and health.
- Food remains also provide a powerful tool for exploring social status and cultural identity as shown through national syntheses of animal bone data from Anglo-Saxon sites (Sykes 2004, 2007; Poole 2011). The animal bone assemblages from the Southeast are variable in the quantity and quality and future excavations must follow the highest standards of environmental archaeology procedures and techniques in order to recover representative assemblages of mammal, bird and fish bones.
- The systematic retrieval of plant remains both charred and preserved anaerobically is vital for the understanding of this transition when so much change occurs in the choice of crops.

### ***Power, territoriality and tribal identity***

- Sub-regional identities need to be examined. The early kingdoms of the South-East were characterised by multiple kingship, a situation which is likely to reflect the fossilization of earlier territorial arrangements. We need a better understanding of how these sub-kingdoms evolved from tribal structures of the 5th and 6th centuries.
- Deepen understanding of the role of mortuary practices in the expression of tribal identity. As work by Semple (2007) has shown, marked discontinuities in the distribution and character of barrow burials represented in the region could be used to shed new light on the question of tribal identity. We need to extend this approach to other facets of the mortuary record, with an emphasis on the landscape context of cemeteries.
- Cultural traditions and tastes can be elucidated through the analysis of diet and wider animal management systems, as shown in recent syntheses of animal bone data (Sykes 2007; Poole 2011). Though the database of animal bone assemblages for the south east is disparate, recording and excavation techniques must be geared towards recovering appropriate assemblages and ensuring accessibility of the zooarchaeological and palaeobotanical data.
- Where possible, assumptions about the date of linear earthworks thought to represent early tribal boundaries need to be tested archaeologically.

### ***Rural settlement***

- Develop and test methodologies for locating Anglo-Saxon settlements, particularly targeting the Weald and other areas where land use patterns may mask potential sites. We need to know to what extent the current distribution of excavated settlements is a true reflection of the Anglo-Saxon situation. As part of this objective, the proposal that arc-shaped field boundaries may represent the imprint of early Wealden colonisation (English and Turner 2004; Chatwin and Gardiner 2006) should be tested.
- Develop new strategies for refining the dating of rural settlements. Very often it is only possible to make a basic distinction between sites of 'Early' (5th-7th) as opposed to 'Later' Anglo-Saxon or Saxo-Norman occupation (8/9th-11th) on the basis of the typology and style of buildings and associated artefacts, particularly pottery. This has encouraged a rather rigid separation of settlement sequences into one or other of these period divisions reinforced by the proposal that the transition between the two was frequently marked by a radical shift in settlement location (as advocated by the model known as the 'Middle Saxon Shift' (Hamerow 1991). Yet excavations outside the region are increasingly recognising threads of continuity in site location, settlement organisation and building form across the Middle Saxon divide. The implication of this work in regions such as the South-East where refined ceramic chronologies are lacking is the need to harness radiocarbon dating enhanced by Bayesian modelling to phase Anglo-Saxon settlements more accurately. The identification and accurate recording of animal bone groups during excavation are invaluable for ensuring the availability of appropriate samples.
- Address a lack of knowledge on the process of village formation. More information is needed on the chronology and process of village formation across the region backed up by detailed studies of individual settlement biographies. The possibility of early medieval occupation surviving within the footprint of modern rural settlements is high. Strict archaeological conditions should be placed on infill development within village cores to recover vital evidence for their origins and incipient phases. There is also a clear role for university departments and voluntary organisations in initiating targeted case-studies.
- Broaden an understanding of settlement hierarchy and patterns of dependency between settlements. Single site investigations need to be counterbalanced by wider parish and multi-parish surveys, preferably taking in contrasting zones of dispersed and

nucleated settlement, along the lines of the Whittlewood Project (Jones and Page 2006).

- Environmental archaeology holds the potential to inform on intra- and inter-site dynamics, through examination of use of space, waste disposal, trade and supply links (e.g. Sandtun, Lyminge and Bishopstone).

### ***Religion and belief***

- Maximise the potential of existing cemetery data for deepening our understanding of the Anglo-Saxon period. The condition of cemetery archives across the region needs to be assessed in terms of their long-term conservation requirements and (in the case of skeletal assemblages) their suitability for stable isotope analysis and radiocarbon dating. Cemetery data recovered from developer-funded excavations needs to be brought to publication in a form suitable for integration and contextualisation.
- Enhance the existing resource by refining an understanding of the landscape context of Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, particularly their spatial relationship to sites of prehistoric and Romano-British ritual activity. Data recovered by the Portable Antiquities Scheme will be of benefit here, but more work is required to interpret the meaning of finds scatters, for example, whether they represent cemeteries or settlements.
- The transition to churchyard burial is a theme which has been under explored in the South-East region. The phenomenon of the 7th- to 11th-century field cemetery requires focused research including reassessment and scientific dating of isolated unfurnished east-west burials. Dating the origins of churchyards will be dependent upon putting provisions in place for recording and analysing skeletal remains of likely pre-Conquest origin brought to light during groundworks and grave digging.
- The subject of Anglo-Saxon pagan religion is in urgent need of study drawing upon recent inter-disciplinary and comparative approaches used in the identification of sanctuaries and ritually charged locales (Blair 1995; Semple 2007).
- The archaeology of Anglo-Saxon monastic sites in the region, especially in East Kent, has been neglected and is in urgent need of attention. A clear priority for future research is the need to expand investigation beyond the monastic church into wider zones of activity. These peripheral areas have a high potential to illuminate the organisation and economic profile of monastic complexes and the poorly defined relationship between monasteries and contemporary lay settlements. Better understanding of key sites will only come with the integration of old and new datasets. One clear case in point is the World Heritage site of St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury, any assessment of which must now take into account Middle Saxon occupation and industrial activity recovered by developer-funded interventions on the site of Christ Church College.
- The late (11th century) Church is poorly understood in the region and the chronology of church building requires more detail. The Saxo-Norman towers of churches are an important element of the suite of standing Anglo-Saxon architecture, but the context of their construction is not understood in detail.
- While the re-use of Roman masonry in the construction of churches is a familiar theme in South-East England, particularly Kent, a better understanding should be developed for other sources of building material including imported stone such as Quarr. Research to provenance building stone is badly needed as well as, if possible, the identification of likely quarries.
- An approach lacking in the region is the study of church sites as part of wider settlements and landscapes. As work in Lincolnshire has shown (Everson and Stocker 2006), this can improve awareness of the social and chronological context in which pre-Conquest parish churches were founded.

### ***Towns, trade and civil administration***

- Canterbury has huge potential to illuminate the development of a major urban centre from its post-Roman re-establishment as a royal/ecclesiastical centre during the 6th century to its emergence as a Shire capital before the Norman Conquest. Yet detailed knowledge of this evolution falls well behind that of comparable sequences obtained for Winchester and York. Areas in need of particular attention include the layout and character of the Middle Saxon settlement, including the location and extent of the elusive trading quarter of Fordwich, the urban topography of the Late Anglo-Saxon town both within and without the walled circuit, and a diachronic impression of economic provisioning and craftwork production. Currently limited comparison can be made between animal bone and plant remains assemblages recovered in Canterbury, given the variable quality and quantity of data, recovery techniques and data publication. Ideally, city specific research agendas would formulate aims and objectives and ensure environmental archaeology procedures and methods are fit for purpose.
- There is a need to assess the character and role of larger urban centres within the region more generally, but understanding is hampered by a dearth of archaeological evidence for Rochester and Chichester.
- Identify, excavate and analyse urban cemeteries. The current lack of data from this source is an obstacle to understanding the health, diet and social identity of townspeople and the institutions involved in the provision of urban burial.
- The origins of the region's small towns should be considered a priority for future research. Much basic data has been collected by Extensive Urban Survey projects but these need to be completed across the whole region and studied synthetically. The possibility that some Late Anglo-Saxon towns, for example, Seasalter, may have origins as Middle Saxon trading settlements needs to be examined archaeologically as does the suggestion put forward by Blair (2005: 330-41) that minsters were an important catalyst for urban growth.
- Deepen an understanding of the character, origins and development of Middle Saxon trading sites and beach markets. The sites of the documented Middle Saxon trading establishments of Fordwich and Sandwich in East Kent still remain to be located archaeologically and evidence is lacking to characterise them against the background of excavated emporia in southern England including Hamwic and Lundenwic. Sandtun in Kent remains the only clearly identified coastal trading settlement in the region (Gardiner et al. 2002). The proposal that there may have been many more such sites strung along the south coast should encourage us to look more closely at other potential candidates including Pagham, West Sussex. The identification of new sites will be dependent upon refining our geomorphic understanding of the Anglo-Saxon coastline. The question of how these entrepôts articulated with sites of consumption including monasteries and *royal villas* also needs to be addressed. The identification of inland fairs and markets represents a further strand that will necessitate a close interrogation of coinage and metalwork recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme.
- Expand and deepen understanding of the origins, development and role of *Burghal Hidage* fortifications. Archaeological evidence for the historically identified *burhs* of Sussex and Surrey has been under exploited, especially in those cases where targeted excavation has a high potential to enhance the existing picture (e.g. Burpham). Our knowledge of how *burhs* functioned as part of an integrated system of routeways, beacon systems and temporary/private fortifications remains severely underdeveloped. The results and recommendations of the Beyond the Burghal Hidage Project (<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/project/beyond-burghal/index.htm>) will play an important part in implementing a longer-term inter-disciplinary methodology for addressing this problem and also provide a comparative basis for reconstructing civil defence provision in Kent which is omitted from the crucial *Burghal Hidage* listing.
- Execution cemeteries represent a key archaeological source for examining the judicial function of the Anglo-Saxon State. Recent work has shown that the origin of such sites may in some cases pre-date the institution of the Hundred indicating that judicial

execution was an administrative role performed within the territorial framework of Middle Saxon estates. A recent synthesis of a notable cluster of execution cemeteries in Surrey (Hayman and Reynolds 2005) represents a good start at harnessing this resource, but a similar approach needs to be extended across the region; subjecting undated deviant burials to high precision radiocarbon dating would help to expand the corpus of confirmed execution cemeteries.

### ***Technology, craft and rural production***

- Deepen an understanding of the technology, scale and organisation of the iron industry. This is a key industry within the region but present evidence is restricted to a handful of sites, far too fragmentary to make informed judgements or generalizations. The relationship between points of extraction in the Weald and smelting/processing sites needs greater clarification. More data is needed on the settlement context of smelting sites to identify the role of the Church and/or royal centres in the organisation of the industry. In this regard, it will be particularly important to identify sites with evidence for both smelting *and* smithing; detailed comparative analysis of slags within existing excavation archives has the potential to augment the corpus of known sites.
- An important local industry which requires further focused research is glass-working. Distributional analysis of glass vessels and beads found in Anglo-Saxon graves suggests that Kent was one of the major glass producing centres of 5th-7th century England (Guido and Welch 2000; Evison 2000). A programme of analysis of the chemical constituents of glass products is badly needed to verify this suggestion scientifically and to explore the question of whether these workshops were engaged in glass making in addition to glass-working.
- Address a limited understanding of the development and organisation of pottery production. The dating of local Anglo-Saxon pottery is very imprecise and more work is needed to define the distributional range of specific vessel/fabrics combinations. The role of continental and regional imports is another area requiring further research. The discovery, recording and analysis of kiln sites should be considered a matter of priority.
- The South-East region and Kent in particular is associated with a distinct repertoire of Early Anglo-Saxon metalwork styles, some involving the highest levels of technical proficiency (e.g. Quoit Brooch, Style II, garnet cloisonné). Understanding of these craft processes and their social context would benefit immeasurably from the discovery and excavation of workshop sites to complement insights gained from the technical and stylistic analyses of finished objects.
- Rather less is known about metalworking traditions during the Late Anglo-Saxon period and the extent to which regional identities continued to be expressed in the style of jewellery and dress accessories. The enlarged corpus of 9th-11th-century metalwork generated by excavation and the Portable Antiquities Scheme should allow this question to be explored systematically for the first time.
- Harness bioarchaeological assemblages to better understand key transitions in crop production, animal husbandry and the process of agricultural intensification. Areas deserving attention include the change from hulled to free-threshing wheats and the changing exploitation of wild taxa as an index of social status.
- Butchery and bone working may provide insight into the type, organisation and intensity of the meat trade and craft specialisation (see models in Sykes 2006a, 2007; MacGregor et al. 1999).
- Further research is required into the pattern of early medieval exploitation of maritime resources. Does the evidence confirm Barrett's suggestion of an intensification of deep-sea fishing around AD 1000 (Barrett et al. 2004)? Although by the Norman Conquest the South-East had a developed herring industry, it is not clear when it began. A closer analysis of maritime faunal assemblages would allow archaeologists to chart the increasing exploitation of deep-water fish stocks.

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