

The Winscombe Project in 2010

Mick Aston, Maria Forbes and Teresa Hall

At the time of writing (December 2010) fieldwork in Sandford and Winscombe has stopped for the winter but analysis of finds and further documentary research and building surveys continues. 33 one-metre-square test pits have now been dug in the parish so far (mainly in Winscombe village and the hamlets of Sandford and Woodborough), 15 buildings have been surveyed by the Somerset Vernacular Buildings Research Group (mainly in Sandford), and much of the medieval documentation for the parish transcribed and translated (by Martin Ecclestone). It is becoming clear that Winscombe parish in the Middle Ages had a very dispersed and varied settlement pattern of hamlets and farmsteads, perhaps over 20 altogether, and that its economy was based on wood-pasture rather than arable farming.

In more recent times large numbers of gentry 'villas' were constructed in the parish and the reasons for this are being investigated by Ann Brooks and Maria Forbes. Fieldwork will begin again in March 2011 when a few volunteers will be needed to help with digging, sieving and recording

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