HM1 High Meadow

A small trench measuring 1m x 3m was opened near the centre of High Meadow. It was placed over the edge of a circular feature noted on the geophysics scan. There were very few modern finds in the upper layer of the trench, which suggests that the area has not been disturbed in recent years. It appears to have been a deep post hole with hard, compacted sides, filled with loose, damp, silty sand.
There were some finds of interest from the Medieval period.

HM2

A small trench measuring 1m x 3m was opened to the south of Trench HM1. It was placed over the NW ditch or gully of a possible trackway running NE/SW across High Meadow. Surprisingly, given its proximity to HM1, there were more recent finds in the top soil, particularly blue and white china. At a depth of 0.4m some damp patches became visible, the largest of these roughly corresponding to the gully visible on the surface. The damp soil in the gully area was excavated to a depth of 90-95cm at which point the natural soil was uncovered. There were no finds in this lower level of the gully but flecks and smears of CBM were noted.

The southern end of the trench at 0.4m consisted of hard, compacted sand which possibly formed the surface of an unmetalled track, it was consistent to a depth of 65 cm at which point it became slightly softer, although it was difficult to tell whether this was due to a soil change or the heavy rain. The natural soil at the southern end of the trench was at 80-85cm.

TP 31 Borough Hill

The Test pit was located within a raised vegetable bed, which meant that there was fine tilth soil, that had been enriched. The pit was 1 by 1 meter.

We observed a mixture of small finds down to 500mm, most of which were Victorian or later. The inclusion of plastics demonstrated a significant churn in the material as expected with vegetable bed preparation. Therefore the contexts were very disturbed.

Between 500 and 600mm on the western side a harder sandy surface emerged. It showed evidence of small animal activity and was quite uneven.

Below 600m an area of coal and coke was also found on the western edge with a partial grate embedded in the section. A further 100mm was removed on the western side of the pit to explore whether any structure existed. There did not appear to be a fire place in situ with a sandy loam under this layer. (900mm)

The Spain

TP12

All the finds in this trench look to be 20th century. At 800m we encountered a steel pipe most probably for gas and so it looks as though the Gas works has run pipes along the brook and houses have just disposed of rubbish in the holes.

Tullys

The trench at the rear of the garden (where the green house had been located) had nothing of interest and came down to natural geology.
The sandpit – I think that this was most probably a fish tank at some time as the base was strong concrete. We managed to open enough of the existing holes in its base to explore below in one corner and uncovered brickwork.
This is either the roof of the cellar or a medieval / Tudor courtyard surface. The bricks looked Tudor or earlier.

The Avenue

The trench was a 2 by 1 meter trench to cover the extent of the area to be explored.
We observed a multigenerational mixture of finds down to 500mm most of which were Victorian or later but there was a smattering of earlier finds in all spits including some exceptional worked flints. This demonstrated a significant churn in the material which would suggest the contexts were very disturbed. Activity suggests light agricultural and gardening.
Between 500 and 600mm finds largely ceased until at 650mm a cemented layer was encountered. On top of this layer was Romano / British pottery.
Excavation continued through the hard layer with a sondage (small area) and eventually came down upon sand.
It was concluded that the hard layer was at some point exposed to the elements and traffic and formed an irregular surface. This pre-dated the Roman period as Roman pottery sat on top and there was nothing but sand underneath.

Shipton House TP27

The trench was a 2 by 1 meter trench in the NW corner of the garden.
Initially finds contained a lot of Victorian material with small smatterings of earlier pottery.
We then came down onto a Rubble layer at 500-600mm of brick fragments and degraded mortar plus some Malm and other non local stone. The quantities of rubble were so large that we resorted to estimating the quantity. One of the list team assess the bricks in the rubble and assessed them as most probably 17th / 18th century with potentially the odd Tudor brick.
At 700mm the rubble seemed to be more concentrated on the West side with Clunch / limestone on the eastern. By 800mm the large rubble pieces had largely gone but an area of well cemented clunch / Limestone was not clearly evident on the western side in a triangular shape looking very like a wall or surface.
It looks like the clunch wall just to the south of the test pit was the wall of a structure evidenced by the presents of two tiled potential lintels. Its possible therefore that there was a building in this area prior to 1868 which might explain why the garden is wider at this point.
Surrounding this the material was a sooty silty sand still with some CBM.
The orange surface on the south side however had been cut by a man made feature with vertical sides on the south side. This ran at a slight angle to the trench with the whole width visible at the west bulk. Looking at the Bulks there were clearly tip lines where material had been brought into this area and tipped into a depression, hole or feature. The lines indicate that this material was brought in form the South. The redish orangy surface was most likely exposed to the elements or mechanically puddled which would explain why it is so flat and hard. Its clear that this was a flat hard area at some point in the past. Then at some point a trench was cut into this (the vertical sides preclude this being natural action) and this also formed a hard surface so was exposed for a time.