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**The post-Roman pottery from Beechbrook Wood,  
Hothfield, Kent**

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>METHOD.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF ASSEMBLAGE .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>PROVENANCE .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>4</b>

**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Fabric totals .....	3
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## 1 INTRODUCTION

A total of 136 sherds (3660 g) of post-Roman pottery was recovered from Beechbrook Wood (ARC BBW00). The assemblage is entirely of medieval date, with a potential date range of mid 11th to late 14th century, and consists largely of sherds of a single vessel.

## 2 METHOD

The pottery was recorded using a project-specific Access database. Fabric types were defined following the Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) type series for post-Roman pottery. A scheme-wide type series was created for rim, base and handle forms, and this was linked where possible to vessel forms whose definition followed nationally recommended nomenclature (MPRG 1998). Details of decoration, surface treatment, manufacture, use-wear and condition were also recorded. Quantification in all cases is by both number and weight of sherds; EVEs have not been considered appropriate for use with post-Roman assemblages.

## 3 DESCRIPTION OF ASSEMBLAGE

Four medieval fabrics were identified; totals by fabric type are given in Table 1. The medieval fabrics include early medieval (EM) and medieval (M) wares, all of which are local or regional wares with known or likely sources in Kent or East Sussex.

*Table 1: Fabric totals*

Fabric Code	Fabric Name	No. sherds	Weight (g)	Date range
EM2	Early medieval shelly ware	2	11	1075 – 1225
EM32	?East Sussex flint and shell-tempered	10	51	1050 – 1225
EM.M5	Ashford Potter's Corner sandy ware with fossil shell	7	60	1125 – 1250
M40B	Ashford/Wealden sandy ware with very rare shell	117	3438	1175 – 1400
	TOTAL	136	3560	

The dominant fabric type here is the Ashford/Wealden sandy ware (M40B), which is comparable to products of the Ashford Potter's Corner kiln (and probably also manufactured at other sites in the Ashford area). Most of these sherds (102) come from a single context (1659: top fill of ditch 1902) and at least 75 (and possibly as many as 101) derive from one vessel – a shouldered jar (MPRG 1998, form 4.1.8) with slightly expanded and flattened rim and sagging base, of probable 13th century date. Sherds from this vessel are in fairly good condition, with breaks only moderately rolled, but slight spalling is visible at the base angle, caused either by a firing fault or perhaps during use (sooting is present on the exterior, indicating use as a cooking vessel). A second, similar jar rim came from ditch 1698.

Other wares are present in much smaller quantities, with very few diagnostic sherds – one squared jar rim in the earlier Ashford Potter's Corner shelly-sandy ware (EM.M5).

Except for the almost complete jar, dating of this small poorly preserved assemblage is difficult (apart from the jar, sherds are small and quite heavily abraded). The date ranges of individual fabric types (see Table 1) give an overall potential date range of mid 11th to late 14th century.

#### **4 PROVENANCE**

The almost complete jar came from the upper fill of ditch 1902, where it was presumably deposited in a single episode of rubbish disposal. This is in apparent contrast to the provenance of other sherds, which were found in very small quantities in nine other stratified and topsoil contexts, including ditches 77 and 1783. The quantities of sherds involved, and their relatively poor condition, suggests that they were incorporated in ditch (and other feature) fills during manuring, rather than representing the deposition of primary refuse. The distribution of sherds appears to be concentrated towards the extreme north and south of the area excavated, and presumably reflects activity peripheral to the occupation of the two nearby medieval manorial complexes – Parsonage Farm to the north and Yonsea Farm to the south.

#### **5 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

MPRG 1998, *A Guide to the Classification of Medieval Ceramic Forms*, Medieval Pottery Research Group Occas. Paper 1