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EDITORIAL

‘We are in a COVID decade: the social, economic and cultural effects of the pandemic will cast a long shadow into the future – perhaps longer than a decade’ (British Academy 2021, 6).

We may hope that medieval settlement studies will have recovered from COVID-related disruptions well before a decade has elapsed, but for now the knock-on effects remain apparent in the pages of this journal. For instance, elements of the CARE project in 2021 – such as test pitting in the Netherlands – were once again hampered, though the project still presents an array of valuable findings in this volume (see Lewis *et al.*). Perhaps the most obvious manifestation of the pandemic’s long shadow, however, is the relative shortness of this volume: largely a consequence of long-expected submissions being delayed by lockdowns and related repercussions. We likewise find ourselves without a Bibliography again this year, for similar reasons; but we are finally able to acknowledge, in print, our debt to the late David Hall: Bill Franklin’s evocative obituary reminds us how much English landscape archaeology owes to David’s devotion, energy and prolific work.

The research content of this volume, though shorter than usual, continues to advance and shape our discipline. The final instalment of Stuart Wrathmell’s trilogy, ‘Sharing out the land of the Northumbrians’, sheds light on further case studies in eastern Yorkshire, and draws out crucial themes concerning the chronology of settlement, the role of the Church, intentions, actors and implementation. Tudur Davies presents a foundational new review of pollen evidence for later medieval Wales, and its implications for our understanding of wider developments in the landscape – thus working to address the lack of palaeoenvironmental studies of late medieval Wales which Paul Belford identified in his review of development-driven archaeology in last year’s volume. Development-driven archaeology features in this volume too, in Mick Boyle’s report on excavations at Great Ellingham, Norfolk; while Carenza Lewis and colleagues present the continuing impact of community research in currently-occupied rural settlements across four countries.

Finally, this volume heralds a new partnership between the Medieval Settlement Research Group and Archaeopress, an Oxford-based publisher which is run by archaeologists and specialises in archaeology-related books and journals. Besides the continued publication of *Medieval Settlement Research* in hard copy for members and subscribing institutions, we will also be working with Archaeopress to develop a digital platform for the journal, to provide subscribers with immediate online access to new volumes. We will retain our current open access policy, of course: papers will become free to download from the Archaeology Data Service after a two-year embargo period. I would like to thank Letty ten Harkel, Susan Kilby and Rebecca Gregory for their invaluable contributions to this new agreement, and David Davison and Patrick Harris at Archaeopress for their continuing advice and support; and I look forward to progressing in this new chapter for *Medieval Settlement Research*.

The Editor

British Academy. 2021. *The COVID decade: Understanding the long-term societal impacts of COVID-19*. London: The British Academy. DOI: doi.org/10.5871/bac19stf/9780856726583.001

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