

Early to Middle Bronze Age 2500 – 1150 BC

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Overview

Understandings of the Early to Middle Bronze Age (E/MBA) in the Eastern Region have transformed over the last 8-10 years primarily as a result of findings from development-led archaeology. Excavation on an unprecedented scale undertaken by a burgeoning number of fieldwork organisations, particularly in the northern part of the region, has produced a huge diversity of evidence spanning the period 2500-1150 BC. The results have been published in major monographs (Boulter et al 2012; Evans et al 2016, 2018, forthcoming a and b; Luke 2016; Richmond et al 2010; Wilkinson et al 2012) and international peer-reviewed journals (Gilmour et al 2014, Robertson and Ames 2015, Robertson et al 2016, Tabor et al 2016) as well as in county journals (NA, PCAS and the PSIAH) and periodicals (e.g. *Current Archaeology*). Finds recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme, university-based studies (dissertations, PhD's, syntheses, etc.) and the outcomes of non-intrusive and palaeoenvironmental surveys provide a vital counterpart to this wealth of excavated evidence.

Over 162 objects dating to the period 2500-1150 BC have been recorded in the Eastern region by the Portable Antiquities Scheme since January 2011. Unsurprisingly given the strong history of metal detecting in these counties, the vast majority of these objects were from Suffolk and Norfolk. Key gold finds (11 in total) include two separate finds of complete torcs from Great Dunham, Norfolk and East Cambridge. A biconical gold bead was recovered from Salthouse, Norfolk; findspots of penannular rings and torc/bracelet fragments span the region. Recently recovered copper-alloy items from the PAS (92 in total) are dominated by axeheads, palstaves and spearheads along with knives, rapiers and pins. A rare MBA ceremonial dirk was recovered from a farm office at East Rudham and is now on display at Norwich Castle Museum. Of the four multiple-object hoards recovered, perhaps the most intriguing is a pair of two-piece looped palstave moulds from Hempnall, Norfolk (PAS ID SF-2D55E2).

University-based and independent research projects have synthesised aspects of the E/MBA in the Eastern Region as part of national surveys, and focused on particular themes or sites that are specific to this region. Overall, the emphasis of these studies has been on hoards, other metalwork finds and burials. At a national level, evidence from the Eastern Region features strongly in Bradley's (forthcoming) updated *Prehistory of Britain and Ireland*. British Bronze Age cremation burials are synthesised in Caswell and Roberts (forthcoming). The Leverhulme-funded *Social Context of Technology* project (University of Bristol) examines evidence for non-ferrous metalworking in later prehistoric northwest Europe (Webley and Adams 2016). A recent study of Bronze Age hoards from England and Wales contends that most were a product of random accumulation and that their deposition was intended to be temporary (Wiseman 2018). Studies specific to the Eastern Region which address key themes raised in Medlycott (2011) are outlined in further detail below (Section X.X).

The National Mapping Programme's *Archaeology of the A11 corridor* (Cattermole et al 2013) provides an important platform for future fieldwork in Norfolk. Finally, Howard et al's (2016) synthesis of palaeoenvironmental investigations in Suffolk river valleys gives vital broader context to earlier surveys focused around the fen edge (Waller 1994).

Summary of key excavations

The findings of key E/MBA excavations undertaken since 2011, or of E/MBA investigations undertaken prior to this but which have only recently been reported on or published in full are summarised by county/Local Authority below, in Table 1 and in Figure 1. Overall it is worth stressing firstly, the significant scale and wealth of excavations especially in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Peterborough and, secondly, the particular richness and novelty of evidence for the MBA.

Bedfordshire

Some outstanding E/MBA landscapes have been excavated in Bedfordshire since 2011, particularly in the area immediately west and north of Bedford. Building on earlier work to the west of Bedford (Luke 2008) recent excavations covering a total study area of some 200 ha have revealed monument complexes, burials, settlement, land divisions and palaeoenvironmental evidence spanning the E/MBA, adding significantly to previous understandings of long-term river valley occupation for these periods (Luke 2016). The major EBA group of large pits and shafts associated with three clusters of ring ditches at the Biddenham Loop stands out, both in terms of the number of cut features and their association with unusual animal bone deposits – mainly of wild species. Other notable findings from this landscape include the broad spatial separation of EBA settlement and monument-related activity, the array of burial practices over the duration of the E/MBA (with an overall *increase* in the intensity of burial in the MBA), the close association between EBA and existing (E and LN) monumental earthworks, and the use of varied boundary constructions (including both post alignments and ditches) to divide the landscape up from c. 1500 BC. Essential to the success of the Biddenham Loop project was the integrated approach taken both to investigating the landscape (combining both intrusive and non-intrusive methods) and to publication (the findings of several nearby but separately funded fieldwork projects were combined). More recently, excavations to the North of Biddenham have exposed unusual and well-dated M/LBA settlement architecture comprising a palisaded enclosure and post alignment appended with a later ditched enclosure. Recently excavated EBA evidence from Broom Quarry, Biggleswade accords well with contemporary evidence from across the region. It includes a combination of plough-truncated ring ditches, and occasional clusters of or isolated Beaker/Collared Urn-associated pits.

Cambridgeshire

Intensive excavation on an unprecedented scale around the southern edge of Cambridge has produced exceptional evidence, particularly for the MBA. EBA activity in this area includes burials at a remodelled Neolithic barrow (Trumpington Meadows) and at an EBA barrow (Fawcett Primary School), and a low level of EBA settlement activity more widely. Extensive MBA fields, a remarkable series of post alignments (Bell Language School), a major cremation cemetery (Fawcett Primary School) and settlement features (roundhouses, enclosures, waterholes) associated with a high density of occupation debris and important palaeoenvironmental remains have been excavated across this area, the initial results from which have recently been published (Evans 2018). This important series of excavations on the southern edge of Cambridge provides a lynchpin for understanding E/MBA landscape development across the region. More

widely, significant evidence for LN/EBA settlement and environments has emerged from long-term excavations at North Fen Sutton; diverse and important EBA ceremonial and burial activity has been excavated at North Fen Sutton, Turners Yard Fordham, Needingworth Quarry and at Alconbury TEA2 (A14 excavations). Further major MBA settlements and fields have been excavated across the county, notably (and unusually) on the clay uplands at Cam Drive, Ely, and at North West Cambridge where an integrated landscape of burials, monuments, fields and settlement features were uncovered (see also evidence from Mitchell Hill Common Cottenham, MMUK Processing Plant The Stukeleys, Milton Landfill and New Road Melbourn). While materially sparse compared to the MBA settlements from the southern edge of Cambridge, these wider settlements provide a vital counterpart to the richer excavated landscapes, furthering significantly our understanding of occupation dynamics during this period. One key feature of MBA landscapes from across the county is the regular occurrence of odd metalwork deposits, human fragments or high densities of occupation debris in ditch fills and waterholes. Important MBA burial evidence comprising two cemeteries – one with cremations and inhumation burials, another with cremation burials only has been found at Field End, Witchford. A rather different mode of activity was revealed at Must Farm, where a substantial MBA oak-pile causeway built over a river channel provided a focus for metalwork deposits – two dirks, one pin, one rapier, two spears and one sword were found along its south eastern side. This adds yet another element to our understanding of the internationally important Bronze Age landscape around the Flag Fen basin.

Essex

EBA monuments and diffuse settlement activity characterise the recent evidence from Essex. Several plough damaged round barrows have been excavated. Key examples include barrows from the Chelmsford-Maldon Effluent Pipeline excavations, where one ring ditch was centred on a cremation deposit in a tree throw; and from New Hall, Harlow where the central grave contained four remarkably similar Beaker pots three of which were probably smashed during the burial ceremony. Occasional pits with Beaker and Collared Urn pottery and LN/EBA flints have been excavated in several contexts. The regular occurrence of single isolated pits with large Beaker pottery (and sometimes also worked flint) assemblages is interesting and underlines previous suggestions that such features do not straightforwardly represent settlement practice (Garrow 2006). The LN/EBA burnt mounds from the recently published Stumble, Blackwater Estuary excavations provide useful balance to inland evidence for this period. In contrast to other parts of the region, no substantial new MBA settlements have been found in Essex. MBA activity includes the urned cremation burials and pottery deposits from EBA barrows at New Hall Harlow and on the Chelmsford-Maldon Effluent Pipeline. Field boundaries at Bulls Lodge Quarry, Boreham may also be MBA in origin (although Ennis 2016 assigns them to the LBA).

Hertfordshire

There is little in the way of substantial new evidence for the E/MBA in Hertfordshire since 2011. EBA evidence comprises primarily cropmark or truncated ring ditches with very few associated finds (e.g. at The Walkdens, Ashwell). Only one of these ring ditch sites was also associated with sparse, probably

contemporary (Beaker) occupation evidence (Wilbury Hill, Letchworth). Recently investigated MBA settlement evidence is fragmentary – it comprises a single round house (Old Manor, Wormley), pits (Kings Park, St Albans), and potentially enclosed settlement at Luynes Rise, Buntingford. This last site awaits excavation but could add substantially to existing understandings of MBA occupation in Hertfordshire. Other potentially E/MBA sites are essentially undated: a palaeochannel (Manor St, Berkhamstead), a flint scatter with associated features (Box Lane, Boxmoor), and a burnt spread, possibly representing waterside activities similar to those found at burnt mounds much more broadly (Frogmore Meadows).

Norfolk

An abundance of fieldwork in Norfolk since 2011 has produced significant E/MBA evidence. Perhaps the most important development has been the identification and characterisation, for the first time in this county, of MBA enclosed roundhouse settlements, fields and droveways. MBA landscape features have now been excavated at Ormseby St Michael; Stonehouse Road, Salhouse; Norton Subcourse Quarry, Heckingham; Sidegate Road, Hopton on Sea and along the Norwich Northern Distributor route at Furze Lane, Tavenham and Bell Farm, Horsford (Norwich Northern Bypass). The excavation at Ormesby St Michael was groundbreaking in terms of revealing that known cropmark enclosures across Norfolk might actually date to the MBA rather than being significantly later. Evidence from Bell Farm, Horsford is remarkable for the density of roundhouses excavated and the association of the enclosed settlement with monumental post-alignments. Meanwhile the unusual metalwork deposit – two torcs, two ring headed pins and two bracelets laid out as if in a grave – from a field ditch at Sidegate Road, Hopton on Sea raises important questions about the strictly functional character of land boundaries and also the sharp distinction that is often made between burial and hoard deposits. Beyond these key sites, survey in the area surrounding Holme II Timber Circle identified clusters of M/LBA post-built structures and a trackway providing important evidence of coastal activity for this period. Evidence for the EBA is relatively understated yet still important. Episodes of Beaker period/EBA settlement activity – including pits and artefact scatters, and a near complete Beaker pot deposited in a tree throw at Woodgate Farm, Alysham – have been identified in at least five separate locations. Isolated Beaker burials were recovered at Norton Subcourse Quarry Heckingham and Bressingham Hall Farm Fersfeld, while a possible mortuary enclosure of this date was identified at Drayton Lane, Horsford (Norwich Northern Bypass). These relatively rare discoveries highlight the true diversity of Beaker period funerary practices.

Peterborough

Understanding of E/MBA fen edge occupation have been developed hugely by investigations along the north-eastern edge of the Flag Fen Basin, east of Peterborough. Landscape-scale excavations at Podge Hole Farm, Willow Hall Farm and Briggs Farm, Thorney have uncovered extensive E/MBA occupation comprising Beaker period pits, EBA pit clusters, cremations, boundary ditches, waterholes, droveways and barrows and MBA field systems, waterholes, roundhouse-associated settlement and salt-working debris. It is now possible to develop a closer understanding of the emergence and organisation of fen-edge landscapes prior to inundation in the later Bronze Age, and of the relationship between settlement,

burials, industry and farming. One intriguing complexity of the E/MBA evidence east of Peterborough (see also Patten forthcoming) is the sparsity of datable material culture associated with these extensive landscape features. In relation to this point, it is worth noting that understandings of this evidence are hampered by the very different approaches taken by different excavating units to (a) unpicking the chronology of these landscapes and (b) seeking to understand ecological change. Archaeological features which are very similar in form – but which essentially lack any definitive dating evidence – have been assigned confidently to periods spanning the EBA to the MIA. A key research priority in this area must be to develop more inventive and systematic approaches (supported by C14 and other dating methods) to unpicking landscape chronology. The detailed dating and environmental sampling programmes undertaken by OA East at Brigg's Farm were exemplary in this respect. Such testing is essential to developing better interpretations of what fields did. Ongoing work on the fringes of Peterborough at Maxey, Fengate and Gores Farm complement the results of these landscape-scale projects. The variability of EBA monument types (a pond barrow, a post-built structure, and more traditional barrow forms, diverse in size) is a key feature of these investigations. The undated but possibly MBA palisaded enclosure at Fengate Power Station has only one potential regional parallel (at North of Biddenham, Bedfordshire) and, once again, emphasises the diversity of MBA architectures.

Suffolk

The recent burgeoning of evidence for the E/MBA is perhaps more notable in Suffolk than in any other part of the region. One key aspect of recent discoveries in Suffolk is the high intensity of settlement, ceremonial and burial evidence for *both* the EBA and MBA - this offers an unprecedented opportunity to explore the emergence of landscapes over the duration of the later 3rd and 2nd millennia BC. Substantial Beaker and EBA occupation comprising mostly pit clusters has been found at Church Road Saxmundham, Flixton Park Quarry, Fordham Road Newmarket, Ingham Quarry and Wangford Quarry. More unusually, EBA activity at Flixton Park Quarry also included a midden deposit, a hedged boundary and a possible structure. EBA ring ditches (with and without burials) have been excavated in at least 10 locations since 2011. Contemporary burials (inhumations, and both urned and unurned cremation burials) have been found both in direct association with ring ditches, with a possible mortuary structure (Ravenswood, Ipswich), in apparent isolation (Land NW of Bury St Edmunds, Fornham All Saints), and in flat cemetery (Wangford Quarry). Important EBA grave good assemblages accompanied the barrow burials at Flixton Park Quarry and at Great Cornard, where one inhumation burial was associated with a necklace of large amber beads and about 400 tiny jet and white shell beads. MBA settlement features and fields have been identified across the county and on a range of geologies, most notably at Fordham Road, Newmarket where a long sequence of enclosed settlement including at least eight round houses was excavated. As was noted for landscapes south of Cambridge, in several cases MBA land boundaries (both within and beyond settlement areas) have produced unusual deposits – an infant cremation burial at Ravenswood Ipswich, an entire inverted MBA urn at Felixstowe Academy, large quantities of freshly broken pottery and loom weights at Primary School, Kessingland. Numerous isolated MBA cremation burials have been found in association with earlier and contemporary ring ditches. In addition, three major MBA cremation cemeteries were excavated at Wangford Quarry (close to a ring ditch), at Cherry

Tree Inn, Debenham (seemingly in isolation) and at the SWISS Sixth Form Collage, Pinewood. Tiny ring ditches (as small as c. 2.5m in diameter) with central cremation burials are a regular feature of the MBA in Suffolk (e.g. at Sutton Hoo, Ingham Quarry, SWISS Sixth Form College Pinewood, Ravenswood Ipswich).

Progress since 2011

In order to assess progress in E/MBA research since 2011 it is worth revisiting priorities for this period raised in earlier regional framework documents (Glazebrook and Brown 1997; Medlycott 2011). These are listed in Table 2. Progress on specific topics within this list is outlined briefly first. Developments in our understanding of key aspects of the E/MBA evidence base (settlement, fields, burial, and so on) are considered in the remainder of this section. Overall, progress has been made in a number of important areas identified in previous research frameworks, both through attempts to actively pursue these topics and due to the sheer volume of recent development-led fieldwork. More broadly there have been significant advances in terms of our knowledge of the E/MBA archaeological repertoire.

Progress on earlier research priorities

Important progress has been made in the following areas mentioned specifically in earlier research reviews:

Addressing ‘gaps in knowledge’ (MBA settlement, archaeology beyond the river gravels)

The sheer scale of development-led fieldwork, in particular the recent drive to create affordable housing in south east England, means that our knowledge of Bronze Age archaeology on clay geologies is much improved and that examining the relative scarcity of MBA settlement in the Eastern Region is no longer an issue. Significant E/MBA archaeology has been recovered from the claylands to the north and west of Cambridge (e.g. at Papworth Everard) and around Ely. Evidence for MBA settlement (and fields) is now perhaps richer in the Eastern Region than anywhere else in Britain. Extensive aerial surveys, particularly on the chalklands of Norfolk during the early 2000s have borne fruit in recent years, with the identification and excavation of a growing number of previously lacking MBA landscape features.

Ceramic studies

Material from the Eastern Region provided a key case study in Law’s (2009) detailed survey of British Collared Urns, enhancing significantly our understanding of EBA ceramic chronologies.

The role of burial monuments in determining/understanding landscapes

Cooper’s (2016 a and b, forthcoming) study of the role of EBA burial monuments in the emergence of later landscapes in East Anglia addressed directly the theme of understanding how such enduring earthworks were built into MBA landscapes.

Developing multi-stranded investigative approaches and research outputs

Work by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit, particularly in the Ouse Valley and around the Flag Fen Basin, has led the way in terms of developing multi-stranded approaches to Bronze Age landscapes, that

combine the findings of detailed scientific analysis, Bayesian modelling of radiocarbon dates and evidence from excavated features (Knight and Brudenell forthcoming; Evans et al 2013, 2016, forthcoming b; Garrow et al 2014; see also Luke 2016; Pickstone and Mortimer 2012). Key to the success of these projects has been the creation of strong partnerships between fieldwork units, university academics, other regional experts and the developers that fund the work. Inventive publically accessible outputs (in particular interactive websites) have been another extremely positive outcome of these close fieldwork unit-client relationships (e.g. <http://www.mustfarm.com/>; <https://www.hanson-communities.co.uk/en/sites/needlingworth-quarry-community-page/archaeology%20>; <http://www.nwcambridge.co.uk/nw-community/archaeology>). The Colchester Archaeology Group's (2014) investigation of cropmark evidence from the Stour Valley makes a useful contribution towards synthesising prehistoric archaeology in an area threatened by agriculture.

Progress in knowledge of the E/MBA evidence base

Settlement

Beyond Bryant's (2013) overview of settlement and landscape in Hertfordshire from 1500 BC, and Garrow's (2006) study that covered EBA settlement in Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, synthesis of E/MBA settlement in the Eastern Region is lacking. There has, however, been significant progress both in terms of the number of known E/MBA settlements across the Eastern Region and the variety of practices found to be associated with these. In particular, it is no longer possible to view MBA settlement as a rarity, even in the north eastern part of the region (Glazebrook and Brown 1997, 16).

One notable characteristic for the EBA is the ubiquity of isolated occupation features – single pits, pit clusters and flint scatters. In Suffolk alone, twelve additional discoveries of such features are mentioned in PSIAH for the period 2011-2016 beyond the sites listed in Table 1. This adds nuance to existing arguments for the diffuse character of EBA occupation (Garrow 2006) and suggests that settlement traces for this period are perhaps more widespread and more diverse than was previously recognised. Along with greater volume of evidence for EBA occupation, comes greater capacity to unpick settlement dynamics for this period. In truth, none of the EBA round houses or the single settlement enclosure identified since 2011 are securely dated. However there is now ample evidence for more irregular post-built structures, midden deposits, pit clusters, waterholes and even possible settlement enclosures from across the region.

As already mentioned, arguably the most significant development in E/MBA archaeology in the Eastern Region over the last 8 years has been the discovery of numerous MBA settlements in a range of different forms. Whereas in 2011, MBA settlement was still viewed as being relatively scarce and was entirely absent in Norfolk, settlement of this date has now been investigated across the region and, importantly, on a range of geologies and in a variety of landscape locations (fen edge, river valley and upland). Open settlements and enclosed settlements defined by ditches, by palisades or by both have been identified. Some of these sites are associated with roundhouses (e.g. Norwich Northern Bypass); others mainly comprise pits, enclosures and working areas (e.g. North West Cambridge). At some sites, settlement features are associated with substantial quantities of occupation debris offering a significant opportunity

to investigate settlement practice in detail (e.g. Clay Farm); elsewhere material culture is virtually lacking (e.g. Bar Pasture Farm). Overall it is in seeking to understand these contrasts that major interpretative progress can be made.

Fields and farming

Although small sections as well as huge expanses of many more MBA field systems have been excavated over the last 8 years, progress in terms of understanding these features has been limited. Yates' (2007) synthesis for southern England as a whole, and Evans et al's (2009) exploration of land division around the Flag Fen Basin are still benchmarks in this respect. Having said this, an increasing number of boundary features have been assigned to the EBA (e.g. at Bar Pasture Farm, Peterborough), pushing back dates for the emergence of land enclosure in the region. Knowledge of the diversity of boundary architectures has also grown – the clear integration of varied forms of land division at the Biddenham Loop, Bedfordshire is noteworthy in this respect. Thorough palaeoenvironmental sampling has been undertaken in the vicinity of extensive field systems at Biddenham Loop, Clay Farm, Cambridge and around Thorney, Peterborough, adding to previous detailed sampling programmes at Over, Cambridgeshire (Evans 2016) and Bradley Fen, Cambridgeshire (Knight and Brudenell forthcoming). It now seems likely that farming practices associated with these systems were varied and that there is no straightforward relationship between the layout of fields and droveways and the activities that accompanied them directly. Progress has also been made in terms of understanding the wider role of field systems. The findings of recent excavations together with studies of major excavated BA landscapes (e.g. Cooper 2016; Evans 2016; Gilmour 2010; Luke 2016; Patten forthcoming; Richmond et al 2010) highlight increasingly that land boundaries played a key role in MBA funerary activities and understandings of the world – they were closely integrated with existing funerary monuments and were a common focus for unusual deposits (of objects, human fragments) and for burials.

Burial

No major overview of E/MBA burial evidence from the Eastern Region has taken place since 2011. Robinson's (2007) detailed study of MBA cremation burial in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk and Caswell and Roberts' (forthcoming) survey of British Bronze Age cremation burials, provide the most recent relevant syntheses. However a significant number of E/MBA burials have been excavated and published since 2011, demonstrating the diverse ways in which the dead were treated. For the EBA, as well as well-furnished and intriguing barrow burials (e.g. at Turner's Yard, Cambridgeshire and on the Chelmsford-Maldon Effluent Pipeline, Essex), isolated Beaker burials, a Beaker-associated flat cemetery (Wangford Quarry, Norfolk), Collared Urn-associated cremation burials within pit clusters, and human fragments in waterholes (North Fen, Sutton) have been identified. Bayesian modelling of radiocarbon dates from E/MBA burials at Over, Cambridgeshire provided an important refinement to understandings of barrow cemetery chronology and the part played by memory in such contexts (Garrow et al 2014). Isotope analysis on the same dataset emphasised the mainly very local origins of those interred at this particular site (Appleby forthcoming). For the MBA, further major cremation cemeteries have been excavated, both in apparent isolation and in association with round barrows and land boundaries. This adds to a growing corpus of previously known MBA cremation cemeteries, particularly along the Ouse Valley (Evans and Appleby 2008; Evans and Hodder 2006; Evans et al 2013; Evans 2016) and at Papworth

Everard, Cambridgeshire (Gilmour et al 2010). More importantly, there is increasing evidence that MBA burial practices were both more intensive and more diverse than has previously been recognised. MBA inhumations (recently, at Field End Witchford, Cambridgeshire) and human fragments as well as formal burials (occasionally with grave goods) in MBA field ditches and waterholes are now a fairly regular occurrence. Indeed at the Biddenham Loop, Bedfordshire, even within a dense Neolithic and EBA ceremonial landscape, formal MBA burials were more abundant than EBA ones.

Monuments

Knowledge of E/MBA monuments has, once again, increased mainly in terms of awareness of the sheer diversity of forms these take as well as the varied practices associated with them and their historical significance. Many forms of ring ditch have been excavated and sampled over the last 8 years, with chronologies that span the E/MBA, varied architectures, diameters ranging from c. 2.5m (Ravenswood, Suffolk) to more than 80m (Hopton on Sea, Norfolk), and a range of associated practices not always including burial. Recent excavations at the Biddenham Loop Bedford, Trumpington Meadows Cambridge, Needingworth Cambridgeshire and along the A14 corridor remind us that interest in existing monuments was not just restricted to EBA round barrows – henges and even Early Neolithic round barrows were remodelled and reactivated as funerary sites during the EBA. Alongside numerous finds of diminutive MBA ring ditches, and leaving aside the longstanding debate over whether MBA fields also operated as a form of monument, knowledge of M/LBA monumental constructions has also flourished since 2011. Adding to the earlier known example at Barleycroft, Cambridge (Evans and Knight 2001, Evans et al forthcoming b), monumental post alignments that cannot easily be explained as extensions to or components of MBA field systems have now been identified at several sites across the Eastern Region. These also raise important questions about connections across the North Sea where similar monuments occur (Fokkens 2012; Bradley et al 2016). The massive MBA ringwork surrounding an earlier pond barrow at Over, Cambridgeshire (Site 9) provides further evidence of the previously unrecognised importance of monument building in the mid to late 2nd millennium BC (Evans et al forthcoming b).

Broader interpretative themes: material culture studies, depositional practices, human ecologies

No major E/MBA finds studies have been conducted in the Eastern Region since 2011. Progress in this area, and on depositional practices more broadly is therefore limited. Yates and Bradley's (2010) study of fenland metalwork deposits provided an important broad grammar for understanding the deposition of different metalwork types in varied landscape locations. Recent University of Reading dissertations have helpfully compared the deposition of flint and cu-alloy daggers in East Anglia and of stone and copper alloy axes more broadly (Dolan 2017; Rogerson 2017). Similarly, an overarching synthesis of human ecologies in the E/MBA in the Eastern Region is still lacking. However, Evans (2013) made a compelling argument that collections of pierced marine shells – probably from necklaces – that occur on a growing number of (inland) fenland Bronze Age sites mark a distinctive local response to expanding floodwater and marshland environments during this period. Evans' (2015) synthesis of the evidence for prehistoric aurochs in the Eastern Region outlines thought-provoking arguments for the extinction of this species in Bronze Age Britain. Meanwhile in a forthcoming article, Evans considers shifts in Fenland resource exploitation over the duration of the Bronze Age (see also Brittain and Overton 2013). These important contributions highlight the interpretative potential both of the region's palaeoecological data and of

undertaking analyses that cross-cut traditional analytical categories (in this case, material culture and palaeoecological studies).

New and ongoing research priorities

Table 2 highlights which of the research priorities from earlier regional reviews remain current and why this is the case. New and ongoing research priorities are explained in further detail below. Due to the generally high quality of fieldwork and publication in the Eastern Region, the emphasis here is mainly upon outlining key areas for synthesis and interpretation rather than on more practical concerns.

Communication and the availability of fieldwork and research outputs

Long-lasting recommendations of previous regional reviews which, in truth, apply to all archaeological periods include the need for (a) improved collaboration between university-based academics and other regional experts and (b) greater investment in producing a broader range of popular and academic outputs. In the context of the much wider ‘open’ and ‘linked’ data movements, and ongoing programmes of change in the way that HER records are created and that excavation archives are logged (as part of the current overhaul of the ADS’s OASIS and Historic England’s Heritage Information Access Strategy) it is now possible to make concrete suggestions about how to improve the poor flow of information in archaeology, both in the Eastern Region and more widely. Difficulties in accessing information about recently excavated sites have undoubtedly led to interpretative shortcomings in research outputs in recent years and, indeed, have hindered the production of this review! Key aims for the coming years should be to:

- Where possible, facilitate easy, online access to grey literature as soon as it has been approved by the Local Authority archaeologist. The online OA grey literature library is exemplary in this respect (<https://library.thehumanjourney.net/>)
- Make the results of synthetic studies at all levels (undergraduate, Masters, PhD, and beyond) available online for the benefit of all researchers (Robinson’s 2007 excellent MA study of MBA cremation burial – available via academia.edu - provides an important example in this respect). This should be the case even where full publication is not possible
- Ensure speedy completion and delivery of OASIS forms so that the relevant information can be built into the ADS grey literature library as soon as possible
- Ensure that data from academic research projects are given to HER officers in a format that can be easily built into existing data systems for the benefit of a wide range of researchers
- Ensure that identifying numbers (HER event and monument numbers, PAS, museum, project, report identifiers, etc.) are easily accessible within digital outputs. This will be key to the success of information flow in future, as semantic web technology develops
- Encourage/create forums for discussion between fieldwork units and researchers much more broadly

Synthesis

One major consequence of the impressive volume of fieldwork in the Eastern Region over the last 20 years, together with divergent trends in the priorities of research funding bodies, has been a growing rift between the creation of evidence for the E/MBA and detailed analysis and synthesis of this material. Tackling this rift should be a key priority for the coming years. Building on research priorities identified in previous reviews, the following aspects of E/MBA archaeology are in most urgent need of synthesis:

- E/MBA monuments – developing Last’s (2007) arguments regarding the diversity of BA funerary monuments and Garwood (2007) and Garrow et al’s (2014) considerations of the chronology of monument building
- E/MBA death and burial more broadly (particularly beyond MBA cremation burials, addressed substantially by Robinson 2007)
- EBA ceramics (particularly beyond Collared Urns, addressed in detail by Law 2009), MBA ceramics in general, both in terms of the makeup of this dataset and their depositional contexts
- E/MBA plant and animal remains – these are vital to understanding Bronze Age ecologies in a period that has been described, at a broad level, as witnessing an agricultural revolution (Stephens and Fuller 2012)
- E/MBA metalwork finds – despite the substantial number of metalwork finds now recorded for this period in the PAS database (Murgia et al 2014) there have been no substantive attempts to draw this evidence together, or to undertake more detailed scientific analysis of these objects
- MBA settlement (and landscapes more broadly) – a vital area for synthesis. In addition to providing an overview of settlement morphology, a consideration of depositional practices, of major contrasts in the makeup of settlement (e.g. in terms of material wealth), of the character of settlement-associated practices would be interesting

Crosscutting interpretative approaches and themes

Beyond synthesising key aspects of the E/MBA evidence base at a regional or sub-regional level, the following interpretative approaches and themes are worth pursuing more broadly:

Interpretative approaches

- The development of integrated accounts of evidence from stray finds (recorded mainly in the PAS database) and from excavated archaeological landscapes. Recent research in later periods (e.g. Chester-Kadwell 2009) provides a good example for this mode of analysis
- The development of integrated understandings of coastal and inland archaeology – the failure to integrate ‘wetland’ and ‘dryland’ archaeological narratives in England has been raised as an issue at a national level (e.g. Murphy 2014, 121)
- Recognition of the accumulative importance of isolated or partially excavated evidence for the E/MBA. Isolated EBA settlement features, BA flint scatters, small sections of land boundaries and undated ring ditches are being excavated on a regular basis across the region. While these features are not necessarily interpretively interesting in their own right, they provide vital context

for our understanding of more significant/concentrated E/MBA archaeological landscapes – it is vital that these scraps of E/MBA evidence are considered actively in broader accounts

Interpretative themes

- Comparison of the emergence of upland ('pioneer') landscapes and lowland landscapes (with prior histories of occupation) in the MBA – while it is now clear that earlier earthworks (Neolithic and EBA monuments) played a major role in the development of certain key lowland MBA landscapes (e.g. at Over, Cambridgeshire and Biddenham Loop, Bedfordshire) this was not necessarily the case more widely. Earlier earthworks such as these were often lacking, or were at least much less concentrated in newly cleared landscapes beyond the major river valleys. The makeup and articulation of M/LBA landscapes in these areas is potentially quite different (see for example Evans and Patten 2011) and deserves further consideration
- Settlement mobility over the duration of the E/MBA – there is a general assumption that the appearance of substantial evidence for settlement and fields in the MBA was accompanied by a settling down of contemporary populations. However this is not necessarily the case (for instance most settlements of this period produce little in the way of occupation debris) and needs to be investigated actively. An integrated approach, that considers the character and intensity of settlement and farming practices is key to addressing this question
- Shifting contexts of monumentality, from an EBA emphasis on circular monuments to the creation of landscape-scale structures in the M/LBA
- E/MBA health – although it is widely recognised that farming practices and living conditions are key to human health, evidence from human remains (e.g. for malnutrition and disease) is rarely considered alongside that from palaeoenvironmental remains (e.g. for the dietary makeup, insects indicative of squalid living conditions, etc.). The growing number of MBA inhumations excavated in recent years offers new interpretative scope in this respect
- The relationship between different modes and contexts of E/MBA deposition (e.g. hoards, burials, wetland deposits and other 'odd deposits'). It is now clear that odd deposits of human fragments, whole pots, metalwork deposits and so on, in waterholes, field boundaries and settlement features were a common occurrence throughout the E/MBA. This evidence could productively be considered alongside that for hoards, burials and watery deposits in order to produce a composite account of depositional practice in the E/MBA
- Links between East Anglia and Western Europe – there is growing evidence for close similarities in the character and makeup of Bronze Age landscapes on both sides of the North Sea during the second millennium BC (e.g. the occurrence of substantial linear boundaries beyond field ditches). It would be interesting to investigate this relationship more systematically and to establish whether broad resemblances in the evidence base were accompanied by more direct evidence for contact (e.g. material exchanges)

Methodological suggestions

Methodological suggestions for the coming years pertain mainly to the dating and scientific analysis of E/MBA archaeology in the Eastern Region and build on priorities summarised in earlier reviews.

Dating

Excavations over the last 20 years have produced a wealth of radiocarbon dates and these have been vital interpretatively. However there is still considerable scope for developing more strategic, inventive and, ultimately, more productive approaches to dating E/MBA evidence. To begin with, it would be extremely helpful if the outcomes of radiocarbon (and other modes of) dating could be collated periodically at a regional level, either in an online forum, or otherwise in annual summaries in local journals (as is the case in Scotland with *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*

<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/des/index.cfm?decade=2000&CFID=10092fcc-a047-4edc-a908-640326b34f73&CFTOKEN=0>). This would help practitioners to make better-informed (and more strategic) decisions about (a) what needs to be dated and (b) how standard site-based dating programmes could productively be enhanced. More specific priorities for dating include:

- EBA structures (e.g. roundhouses) and settlement enclosures – several have been identified, none are securely dated
- Cemetery chronologies – there is scope to build on the work undertaken by Garrow et al (2014), particularly in terms of our understanding of MBA cremation cemetery chronologies
- Field system chronologies – accepting the complexities involved in dating BA land boundaries, teasing out a more refined understanding of specific construction sequences remains important
- BA post alignments and their relationship to field systems – none of the recently excavated BA post alignments from the region are well dated; their temporal relationship with field systems is still not entirely clear
- EBA ceramic sequences – especially the chronological relationship between Beaker, Food Vessel, Collared Urn and Biconical urn deposits
- M/LBA ceramic sequences – especially the chronological relationship between Deverel Rimbury and Post Deverel Rimbury ceramic traditions where materially rich settlements spanning the M/LBA coincide spatially. Ladle and Woodward's (2009) close dating for the M/LBA ceramics from Bestwall Quarry, Dorset provides a useful model in this respect
- Bayesian modelling of site-specific sequences – opportunities for this are rare. However where there is regionally or nationally important evidence together with good stratigraphic information, it is interpretatively essential that more detailed dating programmes of this kind are pursued
- Dating programmes that address interpretative themes extending beyond the site level (e.g. human remains from non-funerary contexts)

Scientific analysis

The burgeoning use of scientific methods to understand archaeological deposits and materials has been a key feature of archaeological research over the last 20 years. There is scope for improving both the application of traditional scientific methods (e.g. palaeoenvironmental analysis) and for exploring the potential of new methods. The following suggestions only scratch the surface in this respect:

- Although detailed palaeoenvironmental and other scientific work has accompanied the excavation of some of the more extensive field systems (e.g. at the Biddenham Loop Bedfordshire Over Cambridgeshire, Briggs Farm Peterborough) and is essential, for instance, in terms of understanding the role played by fields, such work continues to be a feature of the work of only a few key fieldwork organisations. It is vital that (a) a broader awareness is built of the potential applications of scientific methods and (b) relevant samples are taken systematically (rather than patchily as is currently the case) where the evidence is well preserved (e.g. from waterlogged features) and where regionally/nationally significant E/MBA remains are uncovered
- The strategic application of aDNA analysis is currently revolutionising understandings of the makeup of EBA societies and of the character of Bronze Age burial practices (Reich 2018). For instance, it is now possible to identify the genetic relationships of people buried within cemeteries or where there are multiple burials in one grave. Evidence from the Eastern Region (in particular from Over, Cambridgeshire and from Trumpington Meadows, Cambridge) has played a key role in recent international research in this area. It is vital that researchers in the Eastern Region more widely seek actively to contribute to major scientific research programmes of this kind, and are open to the interpretative opportunities of new scientific methods more broadly

Fieldwork

Given the high volume and overall quality of fieldwork in the Eastern Region, there are few recommendations in terms of fieldwork methods. The following suggestions respond to a recent observable trend in fieldwork practices, and to progress in our understanding of the character of Bronze Age fields:

- Excavating beyond development footprints – this includes at least exposing the extent of (if not also investigating in detail) important archaeological entities (major LN/EBA pit concentrations, round houses, round barrows, cremation cemeteries and so on). In some cases it might even be interpretatively worthwhile to sample landscape evidence beyond major concentrations of Bronze Age archaeology (e.g. field systems, see also Evans forthcoming). It is certainly possible that recent shifts in planning policy have contributed to an increase in the partial exposure and excavation of archaeological entities. In the long-term this trend will almost certainly have a negative impact both on developing detailed understandings of the E/MBA and on our capacity to communicate about this archaeology to wider audiences
- Machine excavation of Bronze Age field systems and waterholes following traditional hand excavation (see for instance the methods employed by Luke 2016 and Pickstone and Mortimer 2011). Understandings of E/MBA landscapes could be enhanced significantly if, in addition to hand-excavating slots across ditched boundaries, substantial sections of these systems were regularly machine excavated and archaeological monitoring was conducted on wider areas while development takes place. This would improve the potential for artefact retrieval (and thus enhance understandings of the chronology of these features) and would increase significantly the possibility of identifying the isolated deposits (e.g. burials, metalwork deposits etc.) which we now know are a key feature of Bronze Age boundaries (e.g. Luke 2016, 125)

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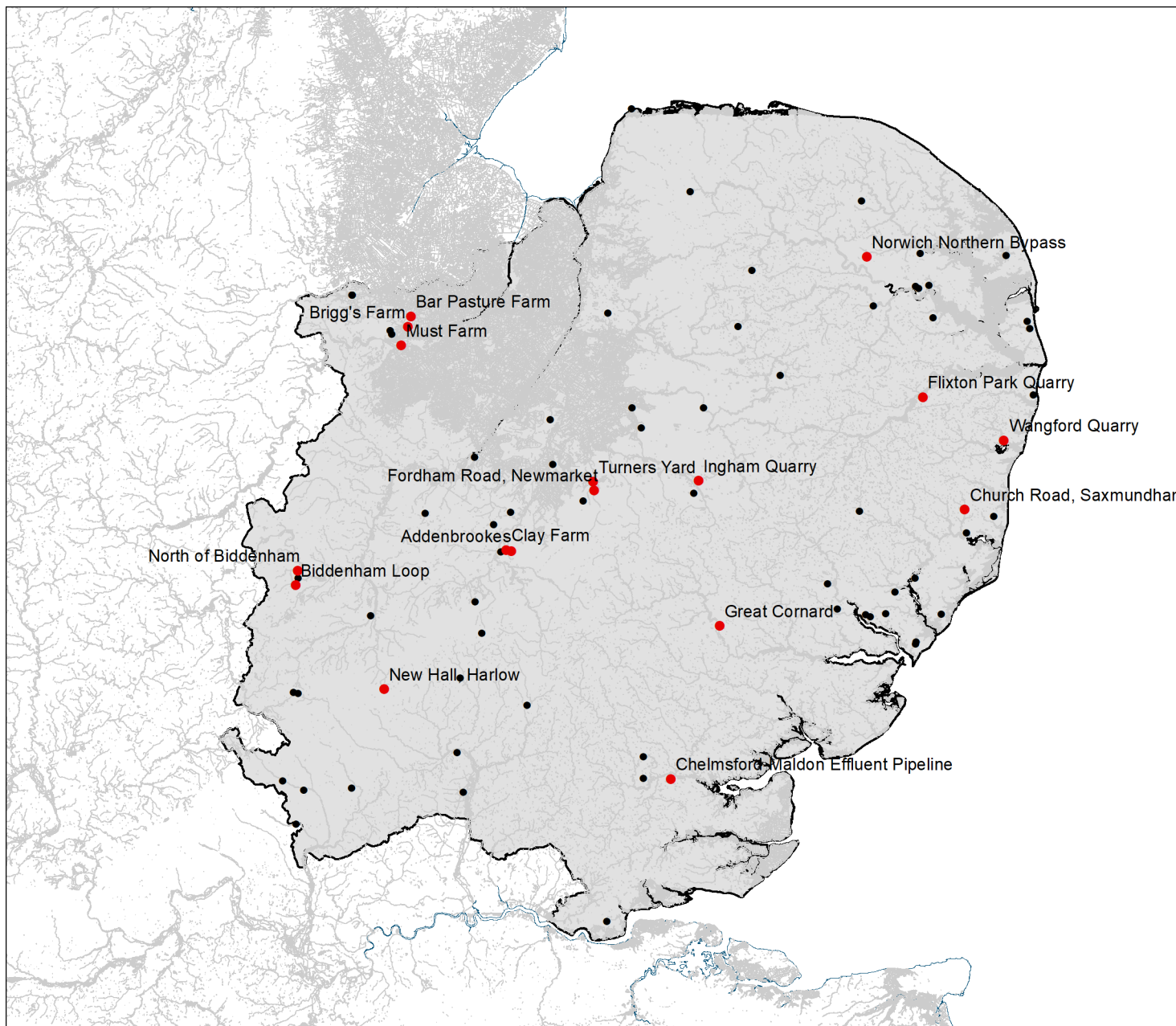
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Authority	HER_id	Project name	Summary	Themes	Key reference(s)	Priority	Period
Bedfordshire		Biddenham Loop, West of Bedford	Amazing multiperiod landscape. EBA evidence comprises three clusters of ring ditches associated with both cremation and inhumation burials, isolated cremation and inhumation burials, a concentration of ritual pits and shafts, and settlement features - pits, flint scatters and water holes. MBA evidence comprises three main settlement clusters, an extensive field system, potentially associated with a system of post alignments and an array of cremation and inhumation burials clustered in the vicinity of earlier monuments and distributed across the landscape	Monument; Burial; Occupation; Odd deposits, Land division; Environment	Luke 2016	1	Both
Bedfordshire		Bedford Water Main	Two undated pits potentially of LN/EBA date. MBA ditched boundaries forming part of a much more extensive field system investigated previously in this area (Luke 2016)	Occupation, Land division	Luke 2011	2	Both
Bedfordshire		Bromham Road, Biddenham	Two EBA ring ditches (no firm dating evidence) and isolated pit clusters. Unusual M/LBA enclosure including both ditched and palisaded elements and a central post alignment. Occasional MBA pits and a waterhole. Postholes from the palisade and the central post alignment produced c14 dates spanning the MBA	Occupation; Monument; Land division	Luke forthcoming	2	Both
Bedfordshire		Black Cat Roundabout Quarry, Roxton	No information available	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bedfordshire		Dairy Farm, Willington Quarry	No information available	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bedfordshire		A5-M1 Link Road, Dunstable	LN/EBA flint scatters, ?M/LBA occupation features, undated prehistoric ditches (potentially representing a MBA field system). No further details available	Occupation; Land division	Brown 2015	3	Both?
Bedfordshire		Bedford Western Bypass (Northern Section)	One certain ring ditch (c. 22m in diameter) that produced no dateable material; a second curvilinear ditch with worked flints (but not identified in other relevant trenches)	Monument	Luke 2012	2	EBA
Bedfordshire		Broom South Quarry, Biggleswade	Single isolated pit with a small assemblage of Beaker pottery (see however Cooper 2005). Pit cluster including two EBA cremation burials with Collared Urn pottery. Substantial but essentially undated ring ditch (few associated objects)	Occupation; Burial; Monument	Tabor 2016	2	EBA
Bedfordshire		Broom Quarry, Biggleswade	Plough truncated/partially excavated LN/EBA ring ditch (no burial evidence) and an isolated pit with a deposit of Beaker pottery and burnt/unburnt animal bone (Tabor 2014, 7-10)	Occupation; Monument	Tabor 2014	3	EBA
Cambridge	ECB4376; ECB4797; ECB4840	Addenbrookes, Cambridge	2020 Lands (Collins 2009): Two large MBA enclosures, with very different forms and ditch fills suggesting different functions together with wider MBA BA land divisions XX; CBC (Newman et al 2010; ECB3039): MBA land boundaries, pits and waterholes; MSCP (Tabor 2013; ECB3884): Possible MBA land boundaries and burnt stone pits; AstraZeneca (Tabor 2015) XX; Bell Language School (Bush and Mortimer 2015; ECB 3736): EBA waterhole, burnt mound and associated features (c14 dated 1772-1628 cal BC), MBA field system and waterholes (c14 dated 1413-1235 cal BC), M/LBA post alignments (ambiguously dated - potentially respected by, correspond with and respect the MBA field system)	Occupation; Land division; Monument; Burial?	Bush and Mortimer 2015; Evans et al forthcoming	1	Both
Cambridge	ECB3686; ECB3984	Clay Farm, Cambridge	Clay Farm (ECB3686): Diffuse EBA pits associated with Beaker and Collared Urn pottery (one with a near complete Beaker vessel), extensive MBA fields (including an early 'strip field' phase), waterholes and enclosed settlement associated with a significant amount of occupation debris (loom weights, pins, awls, a spatula, quern fragments, an amber bead and flint arrowheads), waterlogged wood, and important palaeoecological remains (plant, insect, etc.). Occasional deposits in enclosure ditches and waterholes include a side-looped and socketed spearhead, a possible scabbard chape, human fragments, a dog burial, and other unusual animal bone deposits (e.g. a polecat skull). C14 dates span the later 2nd millennium BC. Regionally important plant and animal remains, Deverel Rimbury and flint assemblages; Fawcett Primary (ECB3984): EBA barrow/double ring ditch (c. 17m in diameter, only part excavated), single inhumation burial cut into the base of the ring ditch, MBA cremation cemetery (37 cremation burials with c14 dates spanning the MBA) cut into ring ditch fills associated with a large assemblage of MBA worked flint, MBA driveway associated with later burial deposits	Monument; Burial; Occupation; Odd deposits, Land division; Environment	Phillips and Mortimer 2012; Phillips 2015a	1	Both
Cambridge	Various	Dimmock's Cote Quarry, Wicken	C-shaped monument associated with a small collared urn deposit, two Beaker pits, Collared Urn deposit in solution hollow, MBA pit and ditch	Burial; Monument; Occupation; Odd deposits	Gilmour 2014a	2	Both
Cambridge	XX	Fordham Bypass	Beaker pits; Beaker midden. MBA cremation cemetery	Occupation; Burial	Mortimer 2005	2	Both
Cambridge	ECB2637	Milton Landfill, Cambridge	E/MBA waterholes, MBA field system (including sections of post alignment) and possible settlement features but with little dateable material	Land division; Occupation	Phillips 2015b	2	Both

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Cambridge	ECB4111; ECB4112; ECB4114	North West Cambridge	Sites II and IV (ECB 4111): Low intensity EBA occupation (possible pits, material deposited in a tree throw); four E/MBA ring ditches, three small cremation burial groups, single crouched inhumation; MBA enclosures, occupation and waterholes associated with a low density of material culture; Site V (ECB4112): possible MBA boundary ditches; Travellers Rest subsite (ECB 4114): LN/EBA flint scatter, possible MBA boundary	Monument; Burial; Occupation; Land division	Cessford and Evans 2014	2	Both
Cambridge	ECB3323	Trumpington Meadows	EBA recutting of MN ring ditch (associated with a Collared Urn deposit - potentially a truncated cremation), Beaker double inhumation burial with turf mound, cremation burials (three unurned, one within a Collared Urn), EBA pits containing settlement debris, undated post-built structure (possibly BA)	Monument; Burial; Occupation	Patten 2012	2	Both
Cambridge	ECB4241	New Road, Melbourne; Munceys Farm Melbourn	2014a EBA ring ditch, Collared Urn deposit in tree throw, MBA fields and possible settlement features; 2014b: Undated ring ditch	Monument, Occupation; Odd deposits; Land division	Ladd 2014a and b	3	Both
Cambridge	XX	North Fen, Sutton	(Connor 2009): Ring ditch with central urned cremation burial (inverted Collared Urn and plano-convex flint knife) and associated pyre deposit; (Webley 2009): LN/EBA in-situ flint scatter, pits, postholes and waterholes, alongside a palaeochannel. c14 dates span the period 2400 -1800 cal BC: (Tabor 2015): XX	Burial; Monument; Occupation, Environment	Connor 2009; Webley 2009; Tabor 2015	1	EBA
Cambridge	ECB3854	Turners Yard, Fordham	Two round barrows - one with a central Beaker inhumation, one with a central Collared Urn cremation. An unusual collection of material (including Beaker pottery, a significant flint assemblage and a fragment of greenstone axe) was deposited in a pit next to the earlier ring ditch; a tightly bound E/MBA inhumation inserted in the ring ditch itself. A jet bracelet accompanied the Beaker inhumation; the Collared Urn cremation was with a copper alloy knife-dagger and a burnt pierced bone point. c14 dates on cremated bone are disparate ...	Monument; Burial; Odd deposits	Gilmour 2015a	1	EBA
Cambridge		A14 - multiple sites	Alconbury TEA2: LN/EBA henge associated with four urned cremation burials	Monument; Burial	Casa Hatton et al 2017	2	EBA
Cambridge	ECB2884; ECB3644; ECB3913	Needingworth Quarry	Neolithic henge monument remodelled as a Bronze Age barrow in an environment affected by the development of fenland conditions	Monument; Burial; Environment	Evans et al 2016	2	EBA
Cambridge	ECB3977	Must Farm	NE-SW aligned MBA causeway comprising a double row of very large oak piles, built over a river channel. Metalwork deposits - two dirks, one pin, one rapier, two spears, one sword - were found along the south eastern side of the causeway, in the contemporary river silts	Monument; Odd deposits; Environment	Knight et al 2017	1	MBA
Cambridge	ECB4413	Cam Drive, Ely	Background scatter of EBA material, large sub-rectangular MBA ditched enclosure with internal divisions, possible post built structures, pits and a waterhole. A sizeable assemblage of MBA occupation debris was recovered from one section of the enclosure ditch	Occupation; Land division; Odd deposits	Phillips and Morgan 2015	2	MBA
Cambridge		Field End, Witchford	Two MBA cremation cemeteries - one with both cremation and inhumation burials, the other with just cremation burials	Burial	Casa Hatton et al (eds) 2017	2	MBA
Cambridge		Mitchell Hill Common, Cottenham	Burnt mound, MBA settlement features	Occupation	Casa Hatton et al (eds) 2017	2	MBA
Cambridge		MMUK Processing Plant, The Stukeleys, Alconbury	MBA enclosure ditch, settlement features and cremation burials	Occupation, Burial, Land division	Casa Hatton et al (eds) 2017	2	MBA
Cambridge	ECB2108	Papworth Everard	Major MBA cremation cemetery (41 cremation burials, 14 urned) arranged alongside a field ditch terminal, close to a stream on boulder clay	Burial; Land division	Gilmour et al 2010	2	MBA
Essex		Chelmsford-Maldon Effluent Pipeline	EBA triple-ditched ring ditch associated with six MBA cremation burials (3 urned, 3 unurned) identified but not excavated in an evaluation trench (Gilmour 2013). Excavated evidence includes: Area A: Single Beaker pit with large assemblage of worked flint and Beaker pottery from eight vessels; Area D: a ploughed-out EBA barrow focused around a tree throw, associated with a primary EBA unurned cremation burial (1872-1639 cal BC; 3423±29 BP; GU35119) and five MBA urned cremation burials (some associated with unburnt flint; C14 dates span the period 1500-1100 cal BC); Area E: pair of EBA pits associated with settlement debris and EBA pottery	Occupation; Burial; Monument; Odd deposits	Gilmour 2015b	1	Both

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Essex	46442	New Hall, Harlow	LN/EBA causewayed ring ditch (c. 16m in diameter) with central Beaker burial (four very similar Beaker vessels but no surviving human remains), probably constructed in two main phases. Single isolated Beaker pit. Truncated MBA urn deposited in upper ring ditch fill (no human remains). <i>Potentially contemporary pit located just outside ring ditch</i>	Monument; Burial; Occupation; Odd deposits	Dyson 2015	1	Both
Essex	46212-3, 46463, 46881	Bulls Lodge Quarry, Boreham Airfield	2011: two isolated pits containing Beaker and ?EBA pottery respectively. Some of the other undated pits and postholes in clusters across the same area probably also date to this period; 2016: later BA field boundaries	Occupation; Land division	Ennis 2011, 2016	2	Both
Essex	13659-60	The Stumble, Blackwater Estuary	LN/EBA burnt mounds associated with a broader scatter of worked flint and pottery and cut features - postholes, pits, cooking holes. c14 dates span the period 2882-2145 cal BC (95% probability)	Occupation; Environment	Wilkinson et al 2012	2	EBA
Herts	30253-4	Wilbury Hill, Letchworth	Truncated barrow represented by a shallow, undated ring ditch (c. 19m in diameter). Clusters of Beaker period to EBA occupation pits located to the south-west of the ring ditch	Monument; Occupation	Barlow and Newton 2013	2	EBA
Herts	30227	Old Manor, Wormley	MBA occupation represented by a roundhouse (c.7.6m in diameter), and a pit containing fragments of decorated Deverel-Rimbury pottery	Occupation	Capon 2012	2	MBA
Herts	16243	Frogmore Meadows, Sarratt	Burnt deposit on the bank of the river Chess, characteristic of Bronze Age burnt mounds. Extensive burnt deposit (limits not established) comprising charcoal, ash and fire-cracked flint, and associated with an undiagnostic flint scraper, potentially BA in date. Probably represents activity similar to that associated with burnt mounds	Occupation	Kaye 2015	2	Not specifically dated
Norfolk	ENF139692; ENF139693; ENF139696; ENF139698	Norwich Northern Bypass	E/MBA archaeology identified at three separate locations: Area 1, Furze Lane, Tavenham: BA boundary ditch; Area 3 Bell Farm Horsford: Significant MBA settlement enclosure associated with 7-8 roundhouses, M/LBA post alignments; Area 5 West of Drayton Lane, Horsford: LN/EBA mortuary enclosure	Monument; Burial; Occupation; Land division	Pooley et al 2015	1	Both
Norfolk	NHER42674	Former RAF Radar Station, Watton, Norwich Road	Small round barrow (c. 6.5m in diameter) with a central cremation in a MBA barrel urn. Five unurned cremations and an undated inhumation were located beyond the mound. Undated pits and postholes and a small assemblage of Beaker/EBA pottery were recovered more widely suggesting EBA settlement activity at the site	Monument; Occupation; Burial	Mason 2011	2	Both
Norfolk	NHER40918	Heckingham, Norton Subcourse Quarry	Two late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age inhumation burials in a shallow depression. One a female (c. 30 years old) with two jet toggles by the skull (earrings?). Second burial truncated by a MBA ?droveway ditch	Burial, Land division	Gurney 2011	2	Both
Norfolk	NHER38044; NHER38205; NHER38212/3 8213; NHER38046; NHER38221	Holme-next-the-sea, Holme II Timber Circle, Holme Beach	Dating and scientific analysis of timbers from Holme II Timber Circle and surface survey of surrounding area. Felling of trees for Holme II dated to the spring or summer of 2049 cal BC (identical to Holme I); E/MBA post-built structures (c14 dated to 1620-1400 cal BC), a M/LBA trackway (c14 dated to 1210-900 cal BC) and evidence for EBA woodland management (c14 dated to 2140-1500 cal BC) recorded in the intertidal zone close to Holme I and II (all dates 95.4% probability)	Monument; Occupation	Robertson et al 2016; Robertson and Ames 2015	2	Both
Norfolk	ENF127270	Hopton-on-Sea, Sidegate Road	Possible EBA round barrow; MBA droveway, fields and low-level settlement activity; MBA hoard (2 torcs, 2 quoit-headed pins & 2 bracelets) cut into one of the field ditches. The items were buried in a manner 'suggestive of a burial' (following the form of a body) and at least three of these items were broken in antiquity	Monument; Land division; Occupation; Odd deposits	Adams et al 2011	2	Both
Norfolk	ENF132710	Woodgate Farm, Aylesham	Near complete and crushed Beaker pot deposited in a tree throw	Odd deposits	Gilmour 2014b	2	EBA
Norfolk	NHER58407	East Rudham	MBA ceremonial dirk found by a farmer during ploughing then kept for some years in the farm office before being presented to the FLO. One of only four known from Britain (one other from Norfolk at Oxborough). Originally thought to have been bent prior to deposition but recent analysis suggests the damage is recent (PAS record summary)	Odd deposits	Rogerson and Ashley 2014	2	MBA
Norfolk	NHER30626	Ormesby St Michael, Land North of Main Road	MBA enclosed settlement, field system	Occupation; Land division	Gilmour et al 2014	2	MBA
Norfolk	NHER57422; NHER57426; NHER54670	National Mapping Programme The Archaeology of the 'A11 Corridor'	63 possible BA barrows in river valley-side locations identified including at least one new barrow cemetery at Sandpit Hill, Bridgham (NHER 57422) and possibly another (could alternatively represent roundhouse settlement) at Overa Heath, Quidenham (NHER 57426); possible BA settlement enclosure identified on the Ashwellthorpe and Tacolneston parish boundary (NHER 54670)	Monument; Occupation	Cattermole et al 2013	3	Not specifically dated

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Norfolk	ENF134151	Postwick Hub, Norwich	N/BA activity, undated ditches and pits. No further information	Occupation	Cattermole (ed) 2016	3	Not specifically dated
Peterborough		Bar Pasture Farm, Thorney	Phase 1: two EBA round barrows with central inhumations and a cremation burial, extensive M/LBA system of land boundaries, numerous undated pits and postholes together with clusters of MBA settlement features, LN-MBA water holes; Phases 2-5: dispersed Beaker settlement activity including a possible structure (and a single pit with a large ceramic assemblage), EBA enclosed settlement (Collared Urn and Food Vessel pottery), MBA land boundaries, droveways and occupation; Phase 6-8a: Beaker period settlement activity (pits, waterholes, a ditch), EBA settlement activity (Collared Urn and Biconical Urn pottery), ditched enclosures, droveway and isolated cremation, MBA droveways, ?loomweights), settlement activity including at least five post-built structures, salt-making debris; Phase 9: two ring ditches (report pending)	Monument; Burial; Occupation; Odd deposits; Land division; Environment	Richmond et al 2010, 2013; Francis and Richmond 2016	1	Both
Peterborough		Brigg's Farm, Prior's Fen, Thorney,	Significant E/MBA evidence including Beaker and EBA settlement activity (pits), pre-barrow inhumation and cremation burials, an EBA barrow, further cremation burials associated directly with the barrow and located in EBA pit clusters, and MBA fields, water holes, roundhouse settlement and salt-making debris, close to the Fen Edge. Key pottery assemblage and extremely well dated	Monument; Burial; Occupation; Odd deposits; Land division; Environment	Pickstone and Mortimer 2011	1	Both
Peterborough		Willow Hall Farm, Thorney	EBA ring ditch, settlement activity (pits), cremation; MBA field system, settlement, waterholes. The latter are all dated to the IA in the report but for no clear reason (dating based on finds from nearby pits recovered in one small area)	Monument; Occupation; Burial; Land division	Ingham 2016	2	Both
Peterborough		Maxey Quarry, Peterborough	Numerous undated pits and postholes (isolated and in pairs), focused around a series of palaeochannels, most probably of Neolithic/EBA date. Five were associated with pottery of this date, three of which were potentially EBA in origin	Occupation	Atkins and Jones 2016	2	EBA
Peterborough		Gores Farm, Peterborough	Possible pond barrow and contemporary settlement activity (pit) tested in trial trenches	Monument; Occupation	Streatfield-James 2015	3	EBA
Peterborough		Fengate Power Station, Peterborough	EBA post-built circular monument; ?MBA palisaded enclosure; MBA field system (part of much broader Fengate land boundary system)	Monument; Land division; Occupation	Middleton 2012	2	MBA
Suffolk	FLN008; FLN062; FLN013; FLN053; FLN009; FLN091; SEY035; FLN068	Flixton Park Quarry, Flixton	FLN 008: EBA ring ditch associated with a surface spread of EBA pottery and cremated human bone; FLN 013: EBA ring ditch, overlapping with but offset from LN post circle monument, and associated with a single unurned cremation; FLN 053: isolated unurned cremation; FLN 062: undated ring ditch (no associated burial); FLN 009: LN/EBA pits, M/LBA unurned cremation (c14 dated 1210-970 cal BC, 95% confidence); FLN 091/SEY 035: Multiple clusters of LN/EBA pits, numerous undated pits and postholes; FLN068: Significant complex of Early Bronze Age ring monuments. One ring ditch was multiphase, with post ring, two phases of segmented ditches, and then uninterrupted ditch, central pit with crouched inhumation with stone wristguard, amber toggles and beaker vessel. One ring ditch double circuit. More pits with Beaker pottery and flint	Monument; Burial; Occupation	Boulter et al 2012; Brudenell and Plouviez (eds) 2014; Minter ed 2016	1	Both
Suffolk	NKT047	Fordham Road, Newmarket	E-MBA settlement activity including a LN/EBA midden/buried soil abutting some sort of boundary feature, a pit cluster (associated with E/MBA pottery), a post built structure (potentially actually MBA), and a line of 'tree-throw pits' (a possible boundary feature, associated with Beaker pottery). MBA evidence includes parts of three phases of enclosure that frame at least eight roundhouses, associated settlement features rich in occupation debris and a wider landscape of fields and droveways. The latest roundhouse was c14 dated to the LBA (1191-941 cal BC), with the remainin c14 dates sitting firmly in the earlier part of the MBA. Location on chalk geology provides a useful balance to existing evidence of MBA settlement on gravel terraces. Key long-term flint assemblage	Occupation; Land division	Rees 2017	1	Both
Suffolk	FSG017	Ingham Quarry, Fornham St Genevieve	Widely dispersed pit clusters with rich charred seed, pot and flint assemblages and associated with a range of Beaker, Food Vessel, Collared Urn and Biconical Urn pottery; two ring ditches (one c. 27m in diameter, the other much smaller) associated with at least four cremation deposits; two additional mini ring ditches with central cremation deposits	Monument; Burial; Occupation; Land division	Newton and Mustchin 2015	1	Both

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Suffolk	WNF023	Wangford Quarry, Wangford and Henham	Important Beaker period activity including pit clusters, a group of flat graves and a ring ditch associated with further EBA burials. The ring ditch later formed the focus for a large MBA cremation cemetery including 17 cremation deposits in Ardleigh-style urns	Occupation; Burial; Monument	Meredith 2015	1	Both
Suffolk	SNP106	Blyth Houses, Church Road, Snape	Blythe Houses (2014): Single LN/EBA pit containing six thumbnail scrapers; (2015): LN/EBA pits, substantial MBA boundaries and gullies, undated pits. No further information available	Occupation; Land division	Mustchin 2014; Minter (ed) 2016	2	Both
Suffolk	IPS676	Ipswich Academy	EBA pits, E/MBA ring ditch (no burial), MBA roundhouse settlement and fields	Occupation; Land division; Monument	Stump and Woolhouse 2013	2	Both
Suffolk	MRM157; MRM162	Land South of Main Road, Martlesham	Extensive system of MBA land boundaries/enclosures covering an area of c. 1.5 ha; EBA pits (Beaker and Food Vessel associated) plus undated pits and postholes	Land division; Occupation	Woolhouse 2014a	2	Both
Suffolk	FEX 299	North of High Street, Walton, Felixtowe	At least one barrow together with associated c14-dated MBA cremation burials spanning the E/MBA; potential MBA settlement features and land boundaries	Monument; Burial; Occupation; Farming	House 2012	2	Both
Suffolk	IP39GD; IPS756	Ravenswood, Ipswich	IP3 9GD: Possible Beaker burial within a mortuary enclosure, represented by a deposit of freshly broken sherds from the upper half of a Beaker vessel and a flint flake, similar to a plano-convex knife. No human remains survived in the acidic soils. Undated (but probably MBA) land boundaries. Undated burnt stone pits, some with evidence for in-situ burning (potentially em); IPS 756: MBA enclosed settlement and fields, two small (c. 2.5m in diameter) ring ditches integral to the field system, urned infant cremation cut into field ditch	Burial; Monument; Land division; Occupation	Woolhouse 2014b	2	Both
Suffolk	Various	Suffolk river valleys	Summary of palaeoenvironmental investigations in Suffolk/Norfolk river valleys during the early 2000s. One key aim was to complement more detailed palaeoenvironmental work in other parts of the region (particularly around the Fens). Overall a picture emerged of increasing woodland clearance combined with more extensive areas of grassland after 2000 BC. Water tables rose significantly in river valleys from the mid-2nd millennium BC	Environment	Howard et al 2016	2	Both
Suffolk	BML018	Sutton Hoo, Bromeswell	Diffuse scatter of LN/EBA pits over three excavation areas, associated with Grooved Ware and Beaker pottery; small MBA barrow (c. 7m in diameter) with central cremation burial c14 dated 1490-1320 cal BC	Monument; Burial; Occupation	Fern 2015	2	Both
Suffolk	COG028; COG030	Rugby Ground, Great Cornard	Three E/MBA ring ditches within a broader ceremonial landscape overlooking the R. Stour, one of which produced a nationally important grave good assemblage. Monument 1 (c. 37m in diameter) was associated with a cremation burial accompanied by a pair of bone tweezers. Monument 2 (c. 25m in diameter) comprised two unequally sized concentric ring ditches enclosing a large central inhumation burial. A second (undated) crouched infant burial cut into the mound material. The central grave contained a young adult woman accompanied by a Beaker vessel and an unusual necklace of large amber beads and c. 400 tiny black jet and white shell beads. A further smaller ring ditch (potentially MBA?) was associated with two cremation deposits	Monument; Burial	Antobus and Muldowney 2011; Boulter et al forthcoming	1	Both?
Suffolk	ESF23632; FAS055; FAS056	NW of Bury St Edmunds, Fornham All Saints	Phase 1: LN/EBA pit cluster, EBA urned cremation burial; Phase 2: Possible BA settlement features. HER also mention a BA burnt mound but not mentioned in eval reports	Occupation; Burial	Beverton 2013a and b	2	Both?
Suffolk	SXM022	Church Road, Saxmundham	At least four main clusters of EBA pits, each slightly different in their makeup and material associations; one group with a flint-dominated assemblage, two associated with Collared Urn pottery, one rich in material including Beaker pottery	Occupation	Newton 2013	1	EBA
Suffolk	FXL061	Foxhall, Suffolk	Possible LN/EBA ditched enclosure, associated with a small Beaker assemblage	Occupation; Land division	Glover 2012	2	EBA
Suffolk	ERL147; ERL203	RAF Lakenheath, Eriswell	ERL 203: EBA ring ditch (29m in diameter) with an off centre crouched burial, possibly of a child. Adds to evidence for EBA occupation (ERL 147) and E/MBA burial (ERL148) from earlier excavations at this site	Monument; Burial	Craven 2012	2	EBA

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Suffolk	SPT035	SWISS 6th Form College, Pinewood	Tight cluster of 18 MBA cremation burials with one outlier (17 within Ardleigh Urns, 2 unurned). One of the cremation burials was surrounded by a small (c. 3m in diameter), shallow ring ditch associated with flint and sarsen fragments, potentially from a ploughed out mound. 14 pits with dense charcoal deposits and evidence for in-situ burning (potentially pyre pits?) were found amongst the cremation burials and in the wider area	Burial; Monument	Sommers 2011a; Beverton et al forthcoming	1	MBA
Suffolk	DBN132	Cherry Tree Inn, Debenham	Large, and seemingly isolated/unmarked MBA cremation cemetery including at least 17 separate cremation-related deposits (7 urned, 10 unurned), grouped in small clusters over an area of c. 70m by 30m. One distinguishing feature of this cemetery was the occurrence of four multiple burials (cremation deposits with more than one person represented), with two of these cremation deposits including fragments from at least five individuals. Two dated cremation burials suggested the cemetery was in use between 1661 and 1401 cal BC. The full extent of the cemetery was not established	Burial	Sommers 2011b; Cass 2012, 2014	2	MBA
Suffolk	FEX281	Felixstowe Academy, Walton	MBA enclosure associated with an inverted Ardleigh vessel deposit; wider system of ditched land boundaries	Occupation; Land division; Odd deposits	Woolhouse 2013	2	MBA
Suffolk	ADT016	Frith Cottage, Alderton	Ring ditch with urned cremations in biconical urns, c14 dated to the MBA	Monument; Burial	Atfield et al 2011; Boulter et al forthcoming	2	MBA
Suffolk	KSS080	Land to Rear of Primary School, Kessingland	Two sides of a MBA enclosure (c. 49 x 26m) with two narrow causeways on the S side. The upper ditch fills on the eastern side were rich in occupation debris including charcoal, freshly broken MBA pottery, decorated loom weights and flints. This deposit produced C14 dates of 1420 and 1260 cal BC. Several small pits/postholes in the surrounding area included material of a similar date and suggest settlement activity	Occupation; Odd deposits; Land division	Heard 2011	2	MBA
Suffolk	EX6101	Burwell Road, Exning	BA round barrow with single cremation. No further information	Monument; Burial	Minter and Plouviez (eds) 2014	2	Not specifically dated

Bronze Age research priority	Date specified	Progress			Ongoing priority	Notes	Type
		None/very little	Some	Major			
Multi-stranded investigations combining evidence from different aspects of past landscapes and from excavated sites and scientific analysis (e.g. palaeoenvironmental evidence)	2000; 2011			x	x	e.g. Evans et al 2016; Luke 2016	Interpretation
Examining the relative scarcity of MBA settlement in contrast to the more significant evidence for MBA fields	2000; 2011			x		e.g. recently excavated MBA settlement evidence currently summarised at a site level in numerous fieldwork reports (e.g. Phillips and Mortimer 2012)	Interpretation
Addressing the role of burial monuments in the determining and understanding landscapes	2000; 2011			x		Addressed substantially in Cooper (2016)	Interpretation
Establishing the character/reality of the divide in the evidence between northern and southern parts of the region	2011	x			x	Still scope for substantial progress in this area	Interpretation
Examination of links between East Anglia and Western Europe	2011	x			x	Little progress in this area	Interpretation
Integration of excavated and stray find evidence	2018				x	PAS-based projects are largely separate from other synthetic analyses for the BA	Interpretation
Recognition of accumulative importance of isolated EBA settlement evidence	2018				x	Significant number of isolated occurrences of EBA pits and flint scatters across the region. Rather than focusing mainly on key excavated landscapes, it is vital that the accumulated findings of smaller scale research are built into synthetic accounts	Interpretation
Emergence of upland (pioneer) landscapes vs lowland landscapes (with prior histories of occupation) landscapes in the MBA	2018				x	The recent wealth of excavated evidence for the E/MBA means that this question can now be addressed	Interpretation
Relationship between different modes of deposition (e.g. hoards, burials and odd deposits)	2018				x	Building on existing studies of BA hoards and substantial recent evidence for odd deposits especially in E/MBA fields and waterholes	Interpretation
Targeted investigation of archaeology on clay geologies	2000			x		Not possible to target archaeology on clay geologies but development pressures have led to increased work in these locations and the recovery of significant evidence for the E/MBA	Method
Greater collaboration between academics and other researchers across the region	2011		x		x	Current emphasis of research funding bodies has prohibited progress in this area	Method
Development of methods for identifying BA archaeology in non-gravel landscapes	2011		x			Increased volume of development led archaeology on non-gravel geologies has countered to some extent the need to develop such methodologies	Method
Strategic c14 dating both where it is helpful to generate absolute dates to support typological schema and where material culture is lacking (e.g. EBA settlement structures, MBA land boundaries and settlement enclosures)	2018				x	Assignations of dates to features lacking substantial material deposits can sometimes be wayward. A more determined approach to dating (and understanding) such features (including greater awareness of existing dates for certain types of feature) would be helpful	Method
Excavation of 'entire' archaeological entities	2018				x	Significant number of E/MBA monuments, burial groups, settlement enclosures and so on have been exposed and excavated only partially. This leads to a truncated understanding of key aspects of BA landscapes. Current wording of planning legislation should be used actively to ensure that regionally important sites are, where possible, at least exposed in their entirety so that it is possible to address questions such as the size of MBA cremation cemeteries; the overall plan form of funerary monuments and so on.	Method
Bayesian modelling of c14 dates, particularly from monuments and ceramic assemblages	2000; 2011		x		x	Some progress in this area (e.g. Garrow et al 2014) but few sites have significant potential for Bayesian modelling and this possibility still needs to be born in mind	Method
Targeted palaeoecological investigation/a more integrated approach to landscape development	2000; 2011		x		x	Progress in some respects (e.g. Howard et al 2016) but more detailed and systematic palaeoecological investigation is required, together with synthesis of the results	Method
Verification of evidence from aerial photographs, especially beyond gravel landscapes	2000; 2011			x	x	Progress particularly in Norfolk (e.g. Mortimer et al 2014) but scope for further work	Method
Greater investment in producing both popular and academic outputs	2000; 2011		x		x	Growing rift between the high volume of published excavation reports and the volume of academic work that synthesises or cross-cuts evidence published at a site level.	Output
Publication of major unpublished fieldwork projects	2018			x	x	Publication of findings is overall good and has improved significantly over the last 10-15 years. However key excavated landscapes remain to be published	Output
Improved communication between fieldwork organisations and availability of grey literature	2018				x	Poor availability of grey literature and limited communication between excavating organisations still impedes the interpretative process. OA's grey literature library is exemplary in this respect as is the close collaboration between the CAU and OA East south of Cambridgeshire	Output

Bronze Age research priority	Date specified	Progress			Ongoing priority	Notes	Type
		None/v ery little	Some	Major			
Better integration of academic research findings into HER records to inform future research	2018				x	Where academic research has engaged with BA evidence from the region, for a variety of reasons this has not been used to inform HER records - the basis for regional research. Improved flow of information between researchers and local authority archaeologists would be beneficial for all	Output
Synthesis of ceramic evidence	2000		x		x	Law's study of Collared Urns (2008 which features evidence from the Eastern Region as a key case study) marks a vital development in this respect but are not published/widely available. Synthesis of Beaker pottery at a regional level and, in particular, of MBA ceramics should be prioritised. The relationship between different EBA ceramics remains a key question. For the MBA basic synthesis is required, together with a reassessment of the emergence of known stylistic tradition (e.g. Ardleigh vs Deverel Rimbury forms more broadly) and depositional practices involving these types.	Synthesis
Synthesis of plant/animal remains; better understanding of agricultural change	2000		x		x	Little progress in this area. This is particularly important given the significant scale on which land boundaries and settlement have now been excavated	Synthesis
Synthesis of evidence from areas threatened by agriculture (rather than immediately by development threats)	2000		x			(Colchester Archaeological Group 2014)	Synthesis
Synthesis of evidence for hoarding	2000; 2011			x		A recent Masters Thesis addresses this topic in some detail (Rogerson 2017)	Synthesis
Synthesis of evidence for flint working throughout the Bronze Age	2000; 2011	x				Still essentially unaddressed	Synthesis
Synthesis of published/unpublished material	2011			x	x	e.g. Bradley forthcoming	Synthesis
Use/analysis of the now significant corpus of metal artefacts	2011	x			x	Little progress in this area	Synthesis
Synthesis of evidence for coastal/maritime archaeology	2011	x			x	Needs synthesising on a national scale. Perhaps more important is the integration of evidence for coastal and inland archaeology for this period	Synthesis
Synthesis of highly diverse burial evidence across the region	2018				x	Recent excavation results have the potential to revolutionise understandings in this respect	Synthesis
Synthesis/analysis of MBA settlement evidence from across the region	2018				x	Recent excavation results have the potential to revolutionise understandings in this respect. NB previously best known from clay lands in Essex (Stansted, A12 interchange mentioned in previous review)	Synthesis