Pupils unearth Saxon village remains

Remains of a late Saxon village and a medieval village have been found for the first time – by a group of 15-year-old schoolchildren.

The students from schools in Beccles, Lowestoft, Stradbroke and Leiston spent yesterday and Tuesday on an archaeological dig at Chediston, near Halesworth. Organised by Aim Higher, it aimed to encourage youngsters to think about going to university.

Villagers had allowed gardens and bits of wasteland to be dug up. Among the finds was the rim of a late-Saxon pot, thought to be 1,000 years old.

Helping the children was Carenza Lewis, former Time Team presenter and lecturer in archaeology at Cambridge University. She said: “We knew nothing about this village at all before we started. The work these kids are doing is unique information, it has not been dug before. We would not have any of this if they hadn’t come along to do the field academy here. The idea is to build their confidence about doing university-level work. This is undergraduate-level work.”

The 44 children were sent to work on 11 sites, doing everything from measuring to digging a research pit and filling it in. They recorded finds and the information will go to the university, where they will spend a day next month.

Fiona Fisk, Aim Higher area manager for Suffolk, said: “It is teaching them research skills, study skills, how to work together.”

Lewis Sharman, 15, from Worlingham, who goes to Sir John Leman High, said: “It is a new experience. I wouldn’t really have thought of doing it before. It showed me that if you want to do something then you can do it.”

Shannon Carter, 14, who lives in North Cove and goes to the same school, said: “I definitely will go to university now.”