

## East and West Cottage

East and West Cottage are very interesting as the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century appearance (as described in the Grade II listing) belies a much earlier origin. The listing states that the interior was not inspected – and it is here that the earlier evidence is to be found. The interior has been inspected by Professor Malcolm Airs and he points to the following evidence to support the earlier origin:-

- The smoke blackened roof timbers where the central segment of the house would have been open to the thatch level;
- The roof timbers are chamfered so intended to be visible rather than left as rough sawn;
- The presence of Crown Posts in the roof construction, these went out of fashion in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century;

These pieces of evidence all point towards the building having started life as a 15<sup>th</sup> century Hall House. Hall houses were built and owned by the Lord of the Manor, and amongst other functions were used as communal eating halls for manor estate staff. Typically Hall Houses comprised a four-bay cruck-framed structure, with the open hall occupying the central two bays. This area was open to the roof, and contained a central fireplace. The smoke from the fire rose into the roof, from which it escaped via vents. A high ceiling drew the smoke upwards, leaving a relatively smoke-free void beneath. One of the end bays contained a pantry (for food storage) and a buttery (for drinks); this bay would be unheated. The other end bay was typically private accommodation.

The building appears to have been divided into two or more dwellings in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when a new brick front wall was added. West Cottage was extended in 1814. In 1881 (survey of households by Reverend Harvey), East Cottage appears to have contained up to five households in the building and rear extensions.