

1. Parish: Bradfield St Clare

Meaning: The wide field (1253 held of John le Seycler)

2. **Hundred:** Thedwastre

Deanery: Thedwastre (–1884), Horningsheath (1884–1914)
Horringer (1914–1972), Lavenham (1972–)

Union: Thingoe (1836–1907), Bury St Edmunds (1907–1930)

RDC/UDC: Thingoe RD (–1974), St Edmundsbury DC (1974–)

Other administrative details:

Thingoe and Thedwastre Petty Sessional Division
Bury St Edmunds County Court district

3. **Area:** 1,427 acres of fertile land (1912)

4. **Soils:** Fine loam over clay with slowly permeable subsoils, slight seasonal waterlogging. Some calcareous/non calcareous slowly permeable clay soils

5. Types of farming:

1500–1640 Thirsk: Wood-pasture region. Mainly pasture, meadow, engaged in rearing and dairying with some pig-keeping, horse breeding and poultry. Crops mainly barley + some wheat, rye, oats, peas, vetches, hops and occasionally hemp

1818 Marshall: Course of crops various usually including summer fallow as preparation for corn products

1937 Main crops: Wheat, oats, barley, beans and green crops

1969 Trist: More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet

6. Enclosure:

7. Settlement:

1978 No apparent centre to development. Church isolated. Three points of settlement: a. along Bury Road b. Pitchers Green c. Bush Green and sewerage works

Line of disused railway runs N–S at west side of parish

Scattered farms

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 17, 1801 – 23, 1851 – 51, 1871 – 47
1901 – 44, 1951 – 39, 1981 – 59

8. Communications:

Roads: To Cockfield, Bradfield St George and Little Whelnetham
1891 Carrier to Bury St Edmunds on Wednesday and Saturday

Rail: 1891 ½ mile from Wheltenham Station. Opened 1865, closed passengers 1961, closed goods 1965 (Bury St Edmunds–Long Melford line)

9. Population:

1086 – 76 (includes Bradfield Combust and Bradfield St George) recorded
1327 – 10 taxpayers paid £0 18s. 1d.
1524 – 13 taxpayers paid £0 13s. 2d.
1603 – 64 adults
1674 – 31 households
1676 – 57 adults
1801 – 131 inhabitants
1831 – 226 inhabitants
1851 – 214 inhabitants
1871 – 233 inhabitants
1901 – 165 inhabitants
1931 – 161 inhabitants
1951 – 134 inhabitants
1971 – 144 inhabitants
1981 – 167 inhabitants

10. Benefice: Rectory

1254 Valued £6 13s. 4d.
1291 Valued £6 13s. 4d.
1535 Valued £7 4s. 7d.
1674 Parsonage has 6 hearths
1831 1 curate. Stipend £60 p.a. Glebe house unfit for residence
Incumbent also holds Rectory of East Barnet, Herts.
1843 Modus of £280 p.a. in lieu of tithes
1891 30 acres glebe. Commodious rectory house (built 1874)
1887 29 acres glebe, gross rent £24 p.a.
1912 Value £170 p.a.

Patrons: Sir Robert Jermyn (1603), Robert Davers (1831), W.R. & G.J. Bevan (1874), A. Wakerley (1912)

11. Church: St Clare
(Chancel, nave, S porch, W tower)

12th cent. Original structure
13th cent. Sepulchral slab built into S chancel wall
14/15th cent. Main structure
1874 Restoration

12. Nonconformity etc:

1593 1 person not attending his parish church
1597 Rector does not wear the surplice
1606 1 person not attending his parish church
1676 2 nonconformists

13. Manorial:

1066/1086	Manor of Bradfield belonging to Abbot of St Edmunds (3 carucates valued £8) Ancient lords of St Cleer or De Sancto Claro
1207	Gerebert de St Cleer (seat said to be situated in a noble park) Manor held of the Abbot of St Edmund by service of 1½ Knights Fees, 14d hidage, 6s. 0½d. to guard of Norwich Castle and ½ load oats to the Abbot (Copinger) Passes by inheritance to William de Montechensey (d.1337) (links with Edwardstone)
1493	John Jerveys owns
1552	Linked to Rushbrooke and Rougham (Davvers family)

14. Market/Fair:

15. Real Property:

1844	£1,406 rental value
1891	£1,239 rateable value
1912	£927 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844–1912	Land always sub-divided
-----------	-------------------------

17. Resident gentry:

1674	Sir George Winyeve
------	--------------------

18. Occupations:

1550–1599	1 yeoman, 2 husbandmen, 1 parson
1600–1649	1 yeoman, 1 husbandman, 1 carpenter
1650–1699	4 yeomen, 1 tailor, 1 clerk
1844	shoemaker, brick/tile maker, maltster, 7 farmers
1912	Schoolmistress, 6 farmers, land steward, beer retailer

19. Education:

1833	1 day and Sunday school, established 1823 (29–36 attend)
1875	Church of England school built, average attendance – 1891 – 35, 1912 – 33 Closed 1950s

20. Poor relief:

1776	– £86 10s. 6d.
1803	– £90 7s. 4½d.
1818	– £103 16s.
1830	– £252
1832	– £215 12s.
1834	– £114 19s.

21. Charities:

22. Other institutions:

1476 Guild of All Saints

23. Recreation:

1891/1912 Beer retailer

24. Personal:

25. Other information:

St Clare Hall: Ancient moated house, formerly retreat of monks of Bury St Edmunds. Now used as farmhouse.

Identification of field named Hellesden in 1840 tithe map for parish has raised speculation that this could mark the spot where St Edmund was martyred and not the traditional site at Hoxne 1984.

Old school building used as village hall 1950s.

Bradfield Wood: Protected by preservation order and by the Suffolk Trust for Nature Conservation. Ancient woodland coppiced in 12th cent. by monks of Bury Abbey. Still managed in same manner and as a nature reserve 1987. Records of coppicing go back to 1252. Visitors Centre opened 1984.

Monks Park Wood: suggested grounds subject to law suit in 1269 between the Abbot and his tenant John de St Clare.

John de St Cleer did homage to Abbot of Bury for manor of Bradfield and he had here a noble seat and park 1302.

Map in parish folder for Bradfield Woods.