

1. Parish: Brightwell

Meaning: Bright spring (Ekwall)

2. Hundred: Carlford

Deanery: Carlford (1530 – 1926), Colneys (1926 -)

Union: Woodbridge

RDC/UDC: (E. Suffolk) Woodbrigde RD (1894 – 1934), Deben RD (1934 – 1974), Suffolk Coastal DC (1974 -)

Other administrative details:

Abolished ecclesiastically to create Brightwell and Foxhall (1530)
Woodbridge Petty Sessional Division and County Court District

3. Area: 1,114 acres (1912)

4. Soils:

Deep well drained sandy soils. Some very acid soils with bleached subsurface especially under heath or woodland. Risk wind erosion

5. Types of farming:

1086		6 acres meadow, 2 mills, 1 cob, 40 sheep, 8 pigs. Problems of acidity with trace element deficiencies
1500–1640	Thirsk:	Sheep-corn region where sheep are main fertilizing agent, bred for fattening. Barley main cash crop
1804	Young:	“This corner of Suffolk practices better husbandry than elsewhere”... identified as carrot growing region
1818	Marshall:	Management varies according to condition of sandy soils. Rotation usually turnip, barley, clover, wheat or turnips in preparation for corn or grass
1937	Main crops:	Wheat, barley, carrots, turnips
1969	Trist:	Dairying has been replaced by arable farming

6. Enclosure:

7. Settlement:

Small dispersed settlement, church apparently in isolated position.
Martlesham airfield intrudes into parish in northern sector; heathland occupies large portions of NW sector
Few scattered farms

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 5, 1801 – not recorded, 1851 – 13, 1871 – 15, 1901 – 18, 1951 – 33, 1981 – 20

8. Communications:

Road: Roads to Fowhall, Newbourn and Bucklesham
1891 Carriers pass through to Ipswich
Rail: 1891 2 miles Orwell station; Ipswich – Felixstowe line,
opened (1877), station closed (1959)
Air: Martlesham Heath Airfield: established (1917) as experimental
unit, closed (circa 1963)

9. Population:

1086 — 11 recorded
1327 — 13 taxpayers paid £2. 0s. 6d. (includes Playford)
1524 — 7 taxpayers paid 6s. 6d.
1603 — not recorded
1674 — 5 households
1676 — Not recorded
1801 — 46 inhabitants
1831 — 86 inhabitants
1851 — 73 inhabitants
1871 — 67 inhabitants
1901 — 81 inhabitants
1931 — 83 inhabitants
1951 — 120 inhabitants
1971 — 54 inhabitants
1981 — 53 inhabitants

10. Benefice: Perpetual Curacy (annexed to Foxhall) (1831) Vicarage (united with Foxhall and Kesgrave) (1915)

1254 Valued £2
1291 Not recorded
1535 Not recorded
1603 Incumbent absent from parish for a long time
1831 No glebe house. Joint gross income £54 p.a. Incumbent
also holds Perpetual Curacy of Kesgrave
Vicarage house built on border with Foxhall (1855)
1891 Joint value £93 p.a. 7 acres glebe
1912 Joint nett value £69 p.a. 18½ acres glebe and residence

Patrons: Sir R. Harland (1831), Rev. Sir C.J.M. Shaw (1912)

- 11. Church** St. John the Baptist otherwise Brightwell Chapel
(Chancel, nave, S. porch, tower)
- 1086 Church without land
14th cent. Main structure. Nave and chancel (circa 1300)
Circa 1656 Tower built by Thomas Essington when it was described
as “almost ruined”
Puritanical vandals (William Dowsing) removed 1 picture
and 12 apostles painted in wood, a font and ordered
steps to be leveled (1643)
Note: Armour of Barnardiston family held within church
- Seats: 130 (1915)
- 12. Nonconformity etc:**
- 13. Manorial:**
- 1066/1086 Manor of 2 carucates belonging to Abbot of St.
Etheldreda
1234 Richard de Gossebeck owns
Early 14th 1450s Lampitt then Curson then Teye then Jermy families
Circa 1542 Edmund Jermy owns
17th cent. Sir William Hewitte (linked to Newbourn)
Circa 1638 Sir Anthony Wingfield owns (linked to numerous manors
throughout Suffolk)
Circa 1655 Thomas Essington owns (linked to Foxhall, Kesgrave and
Waldringfield)
Circa 1663 Sir Samuel Barnardiston owns (linked to Waldringfield)
1738 Sir John Shaw owns
1760 Dismantled
1818 Sir Robert Harland owns (linked to Burstall and
Wherstead)
19th cent. George Tomline owns (linked to Martlesham, Bacton,
Falkenham and Levington)
- 14. Markets/Fairs**
- Fair held on Midsummer Day (June) (1618)
- 15. Real property:**
- 1844 £484 rental value
1891 £672 rateable value
1912 £601 rateable value
- 16. Land ownership:**
- 1844 Not recorded
1891/1912 Col. E.G. Pretyman, sole owner

17. Resident gentry:

1679 Sir Samuel Barnardiston (has house with 24 hearths (1674))

18. Occupations:

1550–1599 1 miller, 1 yeoman
1600–1649 1 yeoman, 1 shoemaker
1650–1699 2 yeomen
1831 13 in agriculture, 6 in retail trade, 4 in domestic service
1844 2 farmers, blacksmith, wheelwright
1912 1 blacksmith

19. Education:

1818 Children attend school in Foxhall
1833 1 weekly school (35 attend)
1912 Children attend school at Bucklesham

20. Poor relief:

1776	£13. 10s. 11d.	spent on poor relief
1803	£27. 1s. 10d.	spent on poor relief
1818	£110. 9s.	spent on poor relief
1830	£138. 10s.	spent on poor relief
1832	£156. 5s.	spent on poor relief
1834	£162. 5s.	spent on poor relief

21. Charities:

22. Other institutions:

23. Recreation:

24. Personal:

Sir John Jenny, created Knight of Bath at Coronation of Anne Boleyn (15th cent.) reputedly lived in parish

25. Other information:

Said to hold site of medieval park

Hall: rebuilt by Sir Samuel Barnardiston (1663), largely dismantled (1760) except for portion used as farmhouse (1909). Reputedly reproduced in drawing by Knuff. Illustration (1707) reproduced in 'History of Suffolk' by D. Dymond and P. Northeast. Staircase from house believed to installed at Walton Hall
Site of former mansion (ancient seat of Barnardiston family) converted to pasture land.

State papers reputedly hold complaint of Thomas Toyser “against illdoers who digged for gold and treasure in this parish” (1538). He further promised to hand all treasure over to the King if he was granted license to mine for gold himself (Victoria County History Vol.2 p.248)

Archaeological sites:

Round barrows (CRN 3732-3745, 3747, 148)

Ring ditches (CRN 3748-51)

Un. Hearth (CRN 3746)

Field system (CRN 3752)

Curvilinear enclosure (CRN 3457)

I.A. excavation/pottery (CRN 3962, 3964)

Neo. Excavation/pottery (CRN 3963, 3965)

Stray finds: Pal. Flint hand axe (CRN 399)

B.A. flint arrowhead (CRN 3753)

Neo. Worked flint (CRN 3754)

Flint axe (CRN 3755, 3756)