

1. Parish: Leiston (includes Sizewell Hamlet)

Meaning: Homestead/valley by beacon fire? (Ekwall)

2. **Hundred:** Blything

Deanery: Dunwich (–1868), Dunwich (South)(1868–1914), S. Dunwich (1914–1972), Saxmundham (1972–)

Union: Blything

RDC/UDC: (E.Suffolk) Blything RD (1894–1895), Leiston cum Sizewell UD (1895–1974), Suffolk Coastal DC (1974–)

Other administrative details:

Civil boundary change 1974
Ecclesiastical boundary change 1958
Blything Petty Sessional Division
Framlingham County Court District

3. **Area:** 4,977 acres land, 10 acres water, 34 acres foreshore (1912)

4. **Soils:**

Deep well drained sandy soils, some very acid especially under heath or woodland, risk wind erosion.

5. **Types of farming:**

1086		Wood for 200 pigs, 1 mill, 6 acres meadow, 5 cobs, 7 cattle, 72 pigs, 112 sheep, 7 beehives, 1 park
1500–1640	Thirsk:	Sheep-corn region, sheep main fertilizing agent, bread for fattening. Barley main cash crop.
1818	Marshall:	Management varies with condition of sandy soils. Rotation usually turnip, barley, clover, wheat or turnips as preparation for corn and grass.
1937	Main crops:	Not recorded.
1969	Trist:	Barley and sugar beet are the main crops with some rye grown on poorer lands and a little wheat, herbage seeds and carrots.

6. **Enclosure:**

1824 Approximately 450 acres in Leiston and Theberton enclosed under Private Acts of Lands 1810.

7. Settlement:

1977 Small town development, set slightly inland from the coast. Sizewell is actually on the coast and consists of power station and coastguard station. Railway crosses parish W–E terminating to east of town. Marshlands occupy northern sector known as Minsmere. Few scattered farms.
Inhabited houses: 1674 – 36 + 6 in Sizewell, 1801 – 100, 1851 – 335, 1871 – 497, 1901 – 690, 1951 – 1,322, 1981 – 1,880.

8. Communications:

Roads: To Kelsale, Theberton, Aldringham, Knodishall and Westleton.
1844 Carrier to Saxmundham.

Rail: 1891 Rail station: Saxmundham–Leiston–Aldeburgh line, opened 1859, spur from Saxmundham to Leiston still operational carrying heavy goods for Sizewell powerstation.

9. Population:

1086 — 124 recorded
1327 — 77 taxpayers paid £5. 10s. 5d.
1524 — Leiston: 33 taxpayers paid £2. 13s 7d; Sizewell: 40 taxpayers paid £2. 12s. 6d.
1603 — Not recorded
1674 — 46 households in Leiston, 6 households in Sizewell
1676 — Not recorded
1801 — 823 inhabitants
1831 — 1,070 inhabitants
1851 — 1,580 inhabitants
1871 — 1,018 inhabitants
1901 — 2,252 inhabitants
1931 — 3,259 inhabitants
1951 — 4,056 inhabitants
1971 — 4,877 inhabitants
1981 — 5,170 inhabitants

10. Benefice: Perpetual Curacy 1831, Rectory 1891

1254 Valued £26. 13s. 4d.
1291 Valued £34. 13s. 4d.
Portion of Prior of Eye 10s. £35. 3s. 4d.
1535 Valued £14. 17s. 2d.
1650 Valued £40. Curate paid 10s per Sunday.
1831 Curate, stipend £95. No glebe house. Gross income £386 p.a.
Incumbent also holds Rectory of Blo Norton, Norfolk.
Valued £376 in 1835.

1891 Tithes commuted for £435 p.a. in 1810, commuted for
£376 p.a. in 1839.
1912 33 acres glebe.
Nett value £300 p.a.

Patrons:

Haberdashers Co. and Christs Hospital, London 1831–

11. Church

St. Margaret

(Chancel, N. & S. transepts, nave, N. & S. porches, W. tower)

pre 1066 3 churches + 100 acres free land
Original church pulled down 1853 except for tower (15th. cent.) which was preserved.
Church rebuilt on cruciform plan

Seats: 1,000 (1915)

Sizewell

St. Nicholas

Recorded 1536
Church has long since been destroyed – no information (1912)

Free Chapel 1R ground. For ease of Leiston parish church, valued 2s in 1546.
Stands on sea bank (V.C.H. Vol II, p.30)

11a Other religious institutions

Leiston Abbey

Blessed Virgin Mary

Premonstratensian Order: White Canons

1182/83 Founded by Ralph de Glanville, Earl of Suffolk.
Endowed with manor of Leiston.
Built too near sea, but continued to be occupied by a few monks to the dissolution (Abbot and several canons).
1363/65 Robert de Ufford built new Abbey 1 mile inland (Abbot and 18 canons).
Destroyed by fire c.1380, rebuilt soon after.
1291 Valued £96. 10s. 11¼d. Total income £130+.
1536 Valued £210. 4s. 4¾d.
1537 both religious houses dissolved.

12. Nonconformity etc:

1597 Curate does not wear surplice.

- 1670 Land purchased for use as Quaker burial ground. Planted with trees 1786.
Quaker meeting house built c.1713, new meeting house built 1861.
Wesleyan chapel built 1848.
- 1891 Wesleyans, Wesleyan Reformers and Independents have chapels + Friends Meeting House.
Congregational chapel built 1858, seats 350.
- 1912 Parish also contains Wesleyan Methodist and United Methodist chapels.

13. Manorial:

- 1066 Manor of 40 acres held by 1 free man.
1086 Manor of 40 acres belonging to Robert Malet and held by 1 free man.
1066 Manor of 27 acres held by Edric.
1086 Manor of 27 acres belonging to Robert Malet and held by Gilbert.

Leiston Manor

- 1066 Manor of 12 carucates (approx. 5,000 acres) held by Edric of Laxfield.
1086 Manor of 12 carucates belonging to Robert Malet.
12th cent. Ranulph de Glanville owns (linked to Aldringham and Gt. Finborough).
1182 Leiston Abbey owns.
1537 Charles Brandon owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk).
1557 Granted to Robert Browne.
1619 Henry Grey owns (linked to Frostenden)
1627 Richard Miller owns. Consisted of messuage, garden 150 acres land, 20 acres meadow, 80 acres pasture, 30 acres wood, 10 acres furze.
1629 Duke of Buckingham owns reselling immediately to the Harvey family
1761 Sir Joshua Vanneck owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)
1909 Joshua Charles Vanneck owns (linked to Heveningham, Huntingfield, Linstead Magna and Linstead Parva)

Sub-Manors

Bade Hall/Wade Hall

- 14th cent. Theobald de Leiston owns and appears to have remained with the Leiston/Leyston family –1438.

14. Markets/Fairs

Grant of market and fair 1312.

Grant of fair 1315/16.

Grant of market 1390/91.

Fair held on December 11/12th 1792.

Tolls of St. Andrews fair (called 'Cold Fair') 13s. 4d. (18th cent.), disused by 1844.

Sizewell:

Market 13th cent., 'History of Suffolk', by D. Dymond and P. Northeast.

15. Real property:

1844 £3,069 rental value

1891 £8,435 rateable value

1912 £14,157 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844–12 Land sub-divided

17. Resident gentry:

1679 Offley Jenney

1694 William Cooke, Sheriff of Suffolk

1793 George Doughty, High Sheriff of Suffolk

1844 R.E. Curwen, T. Theobald, and Rev. J.C. Blathwayt MA

1891 Rev. R.W. Raven MA, Hon. Lady Rose and Capt. J. Sherwood

1912 F.E. Holland BA, Rev. R.G. Roe MA, Hon. W. Vanneck

18. Occupations:

Leiston:

1500–1549 1 husbandman

1550–1599 5 husbandmen, 5 yeomen, 1 sailor, 1 labourer, 1 weaver, 1 miller, 1 fisherman

1600–1649 3 husbandmen, 8 yeomen, 1 labourer, 4 blacksmiths, 1 butcher

1650–1699 1 husbandman, 10 yeomen, 1 labourer, 1 tailor

Sizewell:

1550–1599 1 fisherman, 4 mariners, 1 yeoman

1600–1649 1 mariner, 1 yeoman

1650–1699 1 spinster, 1 husbandman

1831 154 in agriculture, 90 in retail trade, 10 professionals, 8 in labouring, 53 in domestic service, 15 others

- 1844 Gamekeeper, wine/seed merchant, straw hat maker, iron-founders, baker/confectioner, brewer/spirit merchant, saddler/harness maker, victualler, dressmaker, farrier, glove maker, surgeon, cooper, 5 academics, 3 blacksmiths, 2 beerhouse keepers, 3 boot/shoemakers, 2 butchers, 2 corn millers, 20 farmers, 2 gardeners, 5 grocer/drapers, 3 joiners, 2 plumber/glaziers, 2 wheelwrights
Garretts known for steam engines and threshing tackle. Leiston horse-hoe produced by Garretts, awarded medal at Great Exhibition 1851. Victoria County History Vol. II, p.283. Established 1778, employing 600 in 1891
- 1912 Sub-postmistress, 4 coastguards, public officers, 5 police officers, 3 school teachers, 2 drapers, 3 confectioners, cycle maker, 2 gamekeepers, cooper, 3 blacksmiths, 5 butchers, 3 bankers, 7 builders, 6 grocers, 6 insurance agents, 13 farmers, 4 pork butchers, 4 publicans, 2 tailors, 10 boot/shoemakers, gardener, 2 coal merchants, brick manufacturers, dairyman, 2 jobmasters, 4 surgeons, 2 watchmakers, 2 clothiers, refreshment rooms, 4 hairdressers, saddler, printers, auctioneers, dressmaker, cattle dealer, 8 shopkeepers, vet, engineers/boiler makers, 2 chemists, 2 millers, 5 cycle agents, tobacconist, teacher of music, 2 fruiterers, plumber, 2 hardware dealers, 3 bakers, 2 fancy goods dealers, 2 beer retailers, chimney sweep, 2 hotel owners, printer, solicitor, greengrocer, fancy draper, coal dealer, secondhand clothier, fishmonger, milk seller, steam laundry, dyeing and cleaning agency, wine/spirit merchant, ironmonger, photographer, stationer, asst. overseer

19. Education:

- 1833 2 endowed schools aided by private charity (31 attend)
3 daily schools (65 attend), 1 Dissenters Sunday school (75 attend)
Parochial school built 1840 for 100 children
- 1844 5 academies recorded
National school enlarged 1874, 460 attend in 1891, entirely rebuilt 1884, enlarged 1895 and 1899, average attendance 216 in 1912
- 1891 Ladies boarding and day school
High Elementary Council school built 1908, opened 1909, 160 attend in 1912
Leiston Council school built 1912
Summerhill school founded by A.S. Neill c.1944
‘Neill, Neill, Orange Peel’, by. A.S. Neil 1972
‘That Dreadful School’, by. A.S. Neill 1948
‘Summerhill Diary’, by. Bjorne Segefjord 1970

20th cent. Primary school (390 attend), High School (800 attend)
also houses Leiston Adult Education Centre
Middle School (housed in former Grammar school)(590
attend)

20. Poor relief:

1776	Not recorded	
1803	£236. 7s. 6d.	spent on poor relief
1818	£598. 16s.	spent on poor relief
1830	£743. 6s.	spent on poor relief
1832	£829. 1s.	spent on poor relief
1834	£925. 15s.	spent on poor relief

21. Charities:

Grimsby's Charities:

1722 by will of Thomas Grimsby: Interest on £220 for
distribution of bread every Sunday.
38 acres let at £54 p.a. applied to supply of clothing for
poor children, widows and large families.

Beauclerk's Charity:

1869 interest on £100 distributed at Christmas.

22. Other institutions:

1803	1 Friendly Society (60 members)
1844	Coastguard station at Sizewell Gap, compliment of 4 men in 1912 Leiston Rifle Volunteer Corp, 70 members in 1891 Mechanics Institution and Mutual Improvement Society established 1850 (includes newsroom and library)
1891	Police officer listed Constitutional Club built 1909
1912	Urban District Council meets at Council Offices on first Friday of every month 5 police officers recorded The Leiston Observer newspaper Leiston Works Mutual Benefit Society

23. Recreation:

1844	The White Horse Inn, 1 beerhouse
1891	4 beerhouses, The White Horse, The Black Horse and The Vulcan Arms (Sizewell) public houses 5 acres land given for use as recreational ground by Mr. Frank Garrett 1891

1912	The Vulcan Inn, The Crown Inn, The Engineers Arms and the Volunteer Arms public houses Refreshment rooms Leiston Cricket Club, Football Club and Garden Society 2 beer retailers
20 th cent.	The Black Horse hotel and The White Horse hotel Sports complex contained within High School Angling, Cricket Club, Football Club, Rugby Club, Bowls greens Council owned Picture House

24. Personal:

Leiston:

John Greene 1531 became consecrated hermit after resigning as Abbot of new Leiston Abbey. Lived at Chapel of St. Mary in the old monastery close to the sea (roofless ruin near sea at Minsmere, 2 miles north of Sizewell Gap)

Sizewell:

Thomas Plomer (shipman) accused of Lollardy at Norwich Heresy Trial 1430

25. Other information:

Leiston Hall: c.17th cent. façade dominated by two large shaped gables with 'L.H.' flanking top windows. Centre recessed.

40 public street lamps lit by gas from gas works belonging to Messrs. Richard Garrett & Sons (Leiston Works).

The same firm also undertook drainage at Minsmere Level (approx. 1,500 acres marsh land), stopping frequent flooding of this area (1846).

The firm chartered two ships and took all their employees to visit the Great Exhibition 1851 at Crystal Palace.

Leiston Abbey: Adapted for religious uses (retreat) 1918.

Taken over by army 1939 sometime used for housing evacuated families.

Site bequeathed to Diocese of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich by Miss Wrightson 1846.

Run as Conference and Retreat House 1952–.

'St. Marys Abbey, Leiston' Guide Books 20th cent.

Abbey was once included within the Heveningham Hall estate c.18th cent.

Inventory of Leiston Monastery 1536/7, PSIA Vol. III, p.227.

'The Long Shop'. Suffolk Fair March 1980, p.11. The Long Shop built 1852 by Richard Garrett & Sons Ltd., as engineering workshop. Listed building, Working party set up to assess feasibility for use as museum 1977. museum expected to display steam engines and equipment dated 1820–1939 (1980), opened 1984.

'The Gentlemen Apprentices', by R.A. Whitehead 1980, East Anglian Magazine Vol. 39, p.272.

'Pro Corder – The Sound of Music in Suffolk', by J. Lockwood 1980, East Anglian Magazine Vol. 40, p.20. National Association of Young String Players established at Leiston abbey House 1977.

Leiston cum Sizewell: Official Guide.

Sizewell:

1958 site for nuclear power station acquired by CEGB, took 6 years to build

1961–66. Leaflet on proposed site of Britain's first ever PWR power station
1980.

Sizewell 'B' public enquiry – longest ever conducted to date 1987 (1982–1986/7). Sizewell 'B' now under construction 1988.

Sizewell Gap: notorious as favoured spot for smugglers, most particularly the Hadleigh Gang.

Sizewell sent two ships in the North Sea fishing fleet to Iceland 1593.