

# 1. Parish: Sotherton

**Meaning:** Southern homestead/village

**2. Hundred:** Blything

**Deanery:** Dunwich (–1868), Dunwich (North) (1868–1914), N Dunwich (1914–1972), Halesworth (1972–)

**Union:** Blything

**RDC/UDC:** (E Suffolk) Blything RD (1894–1934), Wainford RD (1934–1974), Waveney DC (1974–)

Other administrative details:

Blything Petty Sessional Division  
Halesworth County Court District

**3. Area:** 1,095 acres (1912)

**4. Soils:**

**Mixed:**

- a. Slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged fine loam over clay soils.
- b. Deep well-drained sandy coarse loam soils, some with slowly permeable sub-soils and slight seasonal waterlogging. Risk of wind erosion.
- c. Deep stoneless, mainly calcareous, clay soils. Flat land, risk of flooding by river.

**5. Types of farming:**

1086		2 acres meadow, wood for 100 pigs, 1 cob, 1 cattle, 34 pigs, 25 sheep.
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 with some wheat, rye, oats, peas, vetches, hops and occasionally hemp. Also has similarities with sheep-corn region where sheep are main fertilising agent, bred for fattenin. Barley main cash crop.
1818	Marshall:	Wide variations of crop and management techniques, including summer fallow in preparation for corn and rotation of turnip, barley, clover, wheat on lighter lands.
1937	Main crop:	Wheat, barley, beans.
1969	Trist:	More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet.

**6. Enclosure:**

1804            Approximately 126 acres of Sotherton Moor in Sotherton enclosed under private Act of Lands 1802

**7. Settlement:**

1975            Small dispersed settlement with habitation around the church and at Sotherton Corner. Few scattered farms.

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 19, 1801 – 24, 1851 – 40, 1871 – 33, 1901 – 36, 1951 – 30, 1981 – 25.

**8. Communications:**

Road:            Roads to Brampton, Westhall, Holton, Blyford, Wangford and Henham.

Rail: 1891    Wenhaston station: Southwold–Halesworth line opened 1879, closed 1929.

1912    4 miles Halesworth station: Southwold–Halesworth line opened 1879, closed 1929.

East Suffolk line opened 1854, closed for goods 1964

Halesworth–Beccles–Haddiscoe line opened 1854, closed 1959

**9. Population:**

1086 – 23 recorded

1327 – 8 taxpayers paid 18s. 6d.

1524 – 14 taxpayers paid £1 7s. 4d.

1603 – 41 adults

1674 – 21 households

1676 – Not recorded

1801 – 168 households

1831 – 196 households

1851 – 252 households

1871 – 157 households

1901 – 177 households

1931 – 144 households

1951 – 100 households

1971 – 76 households

1981 – 93 households

**10. Benefice: Rectory (with Uggeshall)**

1254            Valued £4

1291            Valued £5 6s. 8d.

1535            Valued £5 6s. 8d.

1650            Valued £38

1831 Glebe house in Uggeshall. Joint gross income £617 pa  
1844 Tithes commuted for £280 pa. 12 acres glebe.  
1912 Joint nett value £444. 55 acres glebe and residence.  
Incumbent resides in Uggeshall.

Patrons: Lady Rows (1603), Sir John Rous (1650), T. Sheriffe (1831),  
Earl of Stradbroke (1844 and 1912).

**11. Church St Andrew**  
(chancel, nave, stone bell-cote)

1086 Church + 5 acres  
14<sup>th</sup> cent. Tomb recesses (north and south walls of nave)  
Former structure, the materials of which were re-used in  
the rebuilding in 1854.

**Seats:** 125 (1915)

**12. Nonconformity etc:**

1606 1 popish recusant  
1644 Edward Key, Rector of Sotherton, ejected by Suffolk  
Committee of Scandalous Ministers.

**13. Manorial:**

**Sotherton Manor**

1066 Manor of 2 carucates held by Rada, a free man from  
Harold.  
1086 Manor of 2 carucates belonging to Drogo of Beureria.  
1226 Sir Hubert de Burgh owns (linked to Westhall and  
Haughley).  
c.1283 Walter de Bernham owns  
1433 Nicholas Wychyncham owns.  
c.1474 Thomas Crofts owns  
c.1497 John Brytyff owns  
c.1545 Anthony Rous owns (linked to numerous manors  
throughout Suffolk).  
1909 Earl of Stradbroke owns (linked to Reydon, Stoven,  
Uggeshall, Wangford, Henham, Dennington, Tannington  
and Bruisyard).

**14. Markets/Fairs:**

1226 Grant of market to Sir Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent  
(transferred to Westhall 1229).

**15. Real property:**

1844 £966 rental value

1891 £1,106 rateable value  
1912 £886 rateable value

**16. Land ownership:**

1844 Land sub-divided  
1891 Earl of Stradbroke principal owner  
1912 Earl of Stradbroke principal owner

**17. Resident gentry:**

1891 Rev. A. Ashton MA

**18. Occupations:**

1500–1549 2 husbandmen  
1550–1599 4 yeomen, 3 husbandmen, 1 carpenter  
1600–1649 4 yeomen, 1 husbandman  
1650–1699 8 yeomen, 1 blacksmith, 1 hooper, 1 carpenter  
1831 43 in agriculture, 5 in retail trade, 8 in domestic service, 3 others.  
1844 Victualler, 8 farmers  
1912 9 farmers, market gardener

**19. Education:**

1818 1 Sunday school (14 attend)  
1833 1 Sunday school (30 attend)  
1912 Children attend school at Uggeshall

**20. Poor relief:**

1776 £49 19s. 0d.  
1803 £104 16s. 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d.  
1818 £231  
1830 £142 12s.  
1832 £120 12s.  
1834 £119 11s.

**21. Charities:**

**22. Other institutions:**

Possible pest house on border with Henham

**23. Recreation:**

1844 The Cross Bows public house

**24. Personal:**

**25. Other information:**

Possible DMV: see 'The Lost Villages of England', by M. Beresford 1954, p.387.

'Sotherton Hall': East Anglian Miscellany 1927, p.55. Reputedly contains some ancient features and a massive chimney, said to have been drawn by Henry Davy 19<sup>th</sup> cent.

'Fifty Years Work in a Suffolk Parish' by Rev. A. Ashton 1936.