

# 1. Parish: Theberton

**Meaning:** Theodbeorht's homestead/village

2. **Hundred:** Blything

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

**Union:** Blything

**RDC/UDC:** (E. Suffolk) Blything RD (1894–1934), Blyth RD (1934–  
74), Suffolk Coastal DC (1974–)

Other administrative details:

Civil boundary change 1934  
Blything Petty Sessional Division  
Halesworth County Court District

3. **Area:** 2,001 acres (1912)

4. **Soils:** **Mixed:**

- a. Deep well drained sandy and coarse loam soils, some with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging. Risk of wind erosion.
- b. Slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged, some calcareous, clay and fine loams over clay soils.
- c. Some deep peat soils, associated with clay over sandy soils, high groundwater levels, risk of flooding by river.

5. **Types of farming:**

1500–1640 Thirsk: Sheep-corn region where sheep are main fertilising agent, bred for fattening, 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 lighter lands.

1937 Main crops: Wheat, barley, beans, peas, roots.

1969 Trist: More intensive cereal growing and sugar beat.

6. **Enclosure:**

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

## 7. Settlement:

1977/82 Disused airfield occupies large portion of SE sector.  
Railway crosses parish from W–E.  
Small compact development. Church centrally situated. Few scattered farms.

**Inhabited houses:** 1674 – 51, 1801 – 62, 1851 – 117, 1871 – 115,  
1901 – 114, 1951 – 166, 1981 – 128

## 8. Communications:

Road: To Middleton, Westleton, Leiston, Kelsale and Saxmundham.  
Rail: 1891 2 miles to Leiston station: Saxmundham–Aldeburgh line, opened for passengers 1966, spur from Saxmundham to Leiston still operational.  
Water: River Minmere  
Air: Leiston airfield: built 1943 on 500 acres, used by USAF. Returned to RAF 1945, part sold 1955, remainder sold 1965.

## 9. Population:

1086 – none recorded  
1327 – not recorded  
1524 – 42 taxpayers paid £3 7s. 6d.  
1603 – 120 adults  
1674 – 61 households  
1676 – Not recorded  
1801 – 430 inhabitants  
1831 – 537 inhabitants  
1851 – 591 inhabitants  
1871 – 526 inhabitants  
1901 – 490 inhabitants  
1931 – 448 inhabitants  
1951 – 565 inhabitants  
1971 – 363 inhabitants  
1981 – 355 inhabitants

## 10. Benefice: Rectory 1831, discharged rectory 1921

1254 Valued £8  
1291 Valued £26 13s. 4d.  
1535 Valued £26 13s. 4d.  
1597 Parsonage houses are decayed  
1603 Curate, stipend £10  
1650 Valued £55  
1831 Curate, stipend £100 pa. Glebe house. Gross income £354 pa. Incumbant also holds Rectory of Clyst St Mary, Devon.  
1844 13 acres 3P glebe + good residence

1891 Tithes commuted for £430 10s. pa  
1912 Nett value £270. 12 acres glabe and residence.

Patrons: Anciently in patrronage of Leiston Abbey, The King 1603, the Crown 1831 and 1912.

**11. Church** St Peter (thatched)  
(Continuous chancel and nave, S. aisle, porch, vestry and round W. tower)

Norman Windows, fragments on N. and S. side of chancel  
c.1300 Chancel lengthened  
c.1320 Priests door  
14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> cent. Main structure  
1470 Porch  
1846/48 S. aisle rebuilt  
1973 Thatched roof renewed

Note: Consecration cross remains inside the tower.  
Porch contains relics of zeppelin airship which crashed 1916.

Seats: 150 (1915)

Chapel (by the sea) Remains incorporated in small stone house.  
Reputedly connected with buildings of Leiston Abbey (original site).

**12. Nonconformity etc:**

Primitive Methodist chapel in existence 1844, rebuilt and enlarged 1882.

**13. Manorial:**

**Theberton Manor**

1066 Manor of 60 acres held by Swart Hoga, a free man from Ulf, son of Manni Swart.  
1086 Manor of 60 acreas belonging to Robert Malet and held by Hubert.  
1200 Roger Bigot owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)  
1441 Sir Edmund Jenney owns (linked to Pakefield)  
1705 John Fuller owns (linked to Nettlestead)  
1722 William Bradley owns  
c.1750 John Ingham owns  
c.1778 George Doughty owns with which family it remained (1909) (linked to Martlesham)

**14. Markets/Fairs**

**15. Real property:**

1844	£1,856 rental value
1891	£2,356 rateable value
1912	£2,010 rateable value

**16. Land ownership:**

1844	Lord Huntingfield and T.M. Gibson, principal owners
1891/1912	Land sub-divided

**17. Resident gentry:**

1844	Rev. C.M. Doughty BA, T.M. Gibson MP and Rev. H. Hardinge BA
1891	H.M. Doughty JP
1912	H.M. Doughty JP and R. Flick JP

**18. Occupations:**

1500–1549	1 husbandman, 1 tailor
1550–1599	4 husbandmen, 4 yeomen, 2 weavers, 1 baker, 1 labourer, 1 draper
1600–1649	6 husbandmen, 7 yeomen, 1 carpenter, 1 tailor, 1 smith, 1 linen weaver, 1 thatcher, 1 shoemaker, 1 brick maker
1650–1699	2 husbandmen, 8 yeomen, 1 carpenter, 1 spinster, 1 bricklayer, 1 butcher, 1 blacksmith, 1 inn holder
1831	101 in agriculture, 19 in retail trade, 1 professional, 1 in labouring, 8 in domestic service, 12 others
1844	Shoemaker/shopkeeper, land agent, gardener, shopkeeper, shoemaker, beerhouse keeper, joiner, grocer/draper schoolmistress, corn miller, victualler, 2 blacksmiths, 11 farmers
1912	Sub-postmistress, schoolmaster, police officer, blacksmith, 2 shopkeepers, 6 farmers, miller, publican, head gamekeeper, cowkeeper, gamekeeper, 2 farm bailifs, grocer/draper, 2 gardeners, beer retailer, builder.

**19. Education:**

1818	1 Sunday school (70 attend)
1833	2 daily schools established 1825 (34 attend, 14 assisted places)
1838	Infant school built
1872	National school built, replacing former school in the churchyard, enlarged 1882, 100 attend in 1891, average attendance 88 in 1912

**20. Poor relief:**

1776	£76 3s. 0d.
1803	£163 15s. 10d.
1818	£351 17s.
1830	£532 4s.
1832	£671 17s.
1834	£655 2s.

**21. Charities:**

**22. Other institutions:**

1912 Police officer listed

**23. Recreation:**

1662 In holder recorded  
 1844 1 beerhouse, The White Lion public house  
 1891 The Lion public house and 1 beerhouse  
 1912 The Lion Inn public house and 1 beer retailer

**24. Personal:**

**25. Other information:**

Windmills: 2 marsh mills by Minsmere river estuary. Both derelict tower mills called East Bridge Mill and Sea Wall Mill (1975).

Theberton Hall: stands in wooded park, built 1792 by George Doughty. Park and grounds called Theberton Park in existence 16<sup>th</sup> cent., alterations 1852.

Theberton House: stands in well wooded park of 100 acres (1908).

'Chronicles of Theberton', by H.M. Doughty (1910).

'Theberton Church', PSIA, Vol. VII, p.299.