

1. Parish : Wordwell

Meaning: Winding brook

2. **Hundred:** Blackbourn

Deanery: Thedwastre (–1884), Thingoe (1884–)

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

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

Other administrative details:

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

3. **Area:** 2,310 acres (1912)

4. **Soils:**

Mixed:

- a. Deep well drained sandy soils, some very acid especially under heath or woodland. Risk wind erosion
- b. Deep peat soils. Risk wind erosion
- c. Deep well drained fine loam over clay, coarse loam over clay and fine loam soils some with calcareous clay subsoils

5. **Types of farming:**

1086		3 acres meadow, 1 mill
1283		105 quarters to crops (840 bushels), 25 head horse, 53 cattle, 466 sheep*
1500–1640	Thirsk:	Sheep-corn region, sheep main fertilising agent, bred for fattening. Barley main cash crop. Also has similarities with wood–pasture region with pasture, meadow, dairying and some pig keeping.
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 crops:	Rye, barley, lupins
1969	Trist:	More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet

* 'A Suffolk Hundred in 1283', by E. Powell 1910. Concentrates on Blackbourn Hundred. Gives land usage, livestock and the taxes paid.

6. Enclosure:

7. Settlement:

1958 Majority of parish covered by plantation. Development consists of Hall, farm and church only.

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 5, 1801 – 6, 1851 – 11, 1871 – 10,
1901 – 10, 1951 – 23, 1981 – 8

8. Communications:

Roads: To Elveden and Culford

Rail: 1891 2½ miles Ingham station: Bury St Edmunds
–Thetford line opened 1876 closed for
passengers 1953, closed for goods 1960.

9. Population:

1086 – 18 recorded

1327 – 20 taxpayers paid £1 14s.

1524 – membrane either missing or illegible

1603 – 27 adults

1662 – 3 householders recorded*

1674 – 6 households

1676 – 15 adults

1801 – 40 inhabitants

1831 – 69 inhabitants

1851 – 56 inhabitants

1871 – 60 inhabitants

1901 – 42 inhabitants

1931 – 37 inhabitants

1951 – 73 inhabitants

1971 – 16 inhabitants

1981 – 24 inhabitants

* 'The Hearth Tax Return for the Hundred of Blackbourn 1662',
transcribed by S. Colman. PSIA Vol. XXXII part 2, p.168.

10. Benefice: Rectory (consolidated with West Stow) 1831

1254 Valued £6 13s. 4d.

1291 Valued £6 13s. 4d.

1341 Valued £6 16s. 8d.

1535 Valued £7 7s. 2d.

1627 Rectory described as being 'impalled in on all sides ...
gate to south, one barn, one outhouse with stable new
built at the end'

1674 Rectory had 5 hearths

c.1736 Rectory believed demolished

1757 Parsonage house – 'grass grows over the site it'

1831 1 curate, stipend £50 p.a. Glebe house (probably in West Row). Joint gross income £302 p.a.
1912 Joint nett value £175 p.a. 20 acres glebe and residence

Patrons: John Harvye (1603), R.B. de Beauvoir (1831), R.B. Berens (1912)

11. Church **All Saints**
(Chancel, nave, S. porch, W. turret)

1086 Church plus 1 acre free land
Norman Low chancel arch, N & S doorways. Described as early Norman fabric
1757 'The church is a very mean facbrick and kept in a most nasty condition, tis almost quite untiled, but materials lye ready to repair it'
1827 Used as granary prior to restoration
Churchyard contains ancient wall
1857/1868 Restorations

Seats: 105 free (1873)

12. Nonconformity etc:

13. Manorial:

c.1200 William de Wordwell held 4th part of Knights fee of the Abbot of St. Edmunds
1375 Sir John Holbroke died seised
c.1432 Henry Drury owns
Late 15th cent. William Harvey of Ickworth owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)
1799 Charles, Marquis of Cornwallis owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)
1905 Earl Cadogan owns (linked to Ingham and Culford)

14. Markets/Fairs:

15. Real property:

1844 £853 rental value
1891 £758 rateable value
1912 £668 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844 Rev. E.R. Benyon, sole owner
1891/1912 Earl Cadogan, sole owner

17. Resident gentry:

18. Occupations:

1550–1599	1 parson, 1 husbandman, 2 shepherds
1600–1649	1 shepherd
1831	23 in agriculture, 3 in domestic service
1844	Labourers, blacksmith, beer seller
1912	Head forester to Earl Cadogan, steward to Earl Cadogan

19. Education:

1818	1 day school (18 attend), 1 Sunday school (18 attend)
1891/1912	Children attend school at West Stow

20. Poor relief:

1776	£9
1803	£79 19s. 7d.
1818	£81 7s.
1830	£29 8s.
1832	£34 8s.
1834	£70 19s.

21. Charities:

22. Other institutions:

23. Recreation:

1844	1 beer seller
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24. Personal:

25. Other information:

'This village is now so reduced as to have no more buildings ... than the church, the farm or manor house and one dwelling for the shepherd' 1757.
Wordwell Hall: 16th cent. half-timbered house. Possible site of earlier manor house.

Published registers 1580–1850.

'Wordwell: A Study of Village Decay and Depopulation', by C.R. Paine 1968.
Site of original village believed to be to east of main road.

Glebe Terrier 1686 mentions 'pightle lying next the street and occupied with a Tenement of the Town', probably the Town (poor) house (S. of churchyard).

There is evidence to suggest the existence of a village green.

Parish appears in list of impoverished villages in need of a tax rebate 1449/50.
Ministry of Works camp in parish 1951.