

1. Parish: Lidgate

Meaning: Swing gate

2. **Hundred:** Risbridge

Deanery: Clare (–1884), Thurlow (1884–1916), Newmarket (1916–1972), Mildenhall (1972–)

Union: Newmarket

RDC/UDC: (W. Suffolk) Moulton RD (1894–1935), Clare RD (1935–1974), St Edmundsbury DC (1974–)

Other administrative details:

Newmarket Petty Sessional Division and County Court District.

3. **Area:** 2,034 acres (1912)

4. **Soils:** Slowly permeable calcareous/non calcareous clay soils, slight risk water erosion

5. Types of farming:

1086		20 acres meadow, woodland for 25 pigs, 1 cobs, 5 cattle, 55 pigs, 147 sheep, 13 goats
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.
1818	Marshall:	Course of crops varies usually including summer fallow as preparation for corn products
1937	Main crops:	Wheat, barley, peas, beans, roots.
1969	Trist:	More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet

6. Enclosure:

1,958 acres enclosed under Private Acts of Lands 1812

7. Settlement:

1958 Small well spaced development along Wickhambrook road with church and castle situated in close proximity to each other at northern end of settlement. Chalk pits in NW sector. Scattered farms.

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 30, 1801 – 57, 1851 – 101, 1871 – 102, 1901 – 78, 1951 – 79, 1981 – 79

8. Communications:

Road: To Dalham, Ousden, Wickhambrook, Cowlinge and Kirtling.
1844 Carrier: to Bury St Edmunds on Wednesday
1891 Carriers: to Newmarket on Tuesday
to Bury St Edmunds on Wednesday
1912 Carrier: to Newmarket on Tuesday

9. Population:

1086 – 34 recorded
1327 – 25 taxpayers paid £3.11s. 6d.
1524 – 30 taxpayers paid £3. 17s. 6d.
1603 – 120 adults
1674 – 67 households
1676 – 223 adults
1801 – 323 inhabitants
1831 – 442 inhabitants
1851 – 494 inhabitants
1871 – 433 inhabitants
1901 – 372 inhabitants
1931 – 252 inhabitants
1951 – 259 inhabitants
1971 – 234 inhabitants
1981 – 187 inhabitants

10. Benefice: Rectory

1254 Valued £13. 6s. 8d.
Portion to the cleric in tithes: 6s. 8d. £14. 13s. 4d.
1291 Valued at £16. 0s. 0d
1535 Valued £15. 10s. 5d.
Modus of £480 p.a. awarded 1817
1831 Glebe house. Gross income £482 p.a.
New rectory house built 1842
1844 54 acres glebe.
Value £460 1873
Tithe rent awarded of £264 p.a. 1886
1912 Nett value £180 p.a. + residence and 55 acre glebe

Patrons: Sir John Cotton (1603), Duke of Rutland (1831),
Rev. R. Kettle (1873), Mrs. A. A. Wilson (1891)

11. Church St. Mary

(Chancel, nave, aisles, S. porch, W. tower)

Situated within moated site of former castle, on site of one of the three baileys.

13/14th cent. Main structure
13th cent. Chancel

1853–1863	Chancel restored
1871	Restoration
1895	Nave and aisles restored
1905	Tower restored

Seats: 100 appropriated, 200 free (1873)

12. Nonconformity etc:

1814/1815	2 houses set aside for worship (1815 new chapel mentioned)
1662	Minister ejected Independent / Congregational chapel built 1850, closed 1962

13. Manorial:

1066	Manor of 4 carucates held as estate by 3 free men
1086	Manor of 4 carucates belonging to Reginald the Breton (claims in alms of the King)

Lidgate Manor

1066	Manor of 4 carucates 60 acres held by Stori
1086	Manor of 4 carucates 60 acres belonging to William of Vatteville
post 1086	Given to Ralph in fee of the Abbot of St. Edmund
c.1115	Maurice de Windsor owns
1535	Henry Neville, Lord Abergavenny owns
1535/1562	Sir John Cotton owns
18 th cent.	Thomas, Lord Jermyn owns
c.1722	Charles, Duke of Somerset (linked to Gazeley and Withersfield) owns
1799	Charles Manners owns

14. Markets/Fairs:

Fair remembered Late 19th/early 20th cent.

15. Real property:

1844	– £1,438 rental value
1891	– £2,383 rateable value
1912	– £2,113 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844–1912	Land sub-divided
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17. Resident gentry:

1891	O.P. Baldwin JP
1912	F.N. Boccock JP

18. Occupations:

1500–1599	6 yeomen, 1 labourer, 1 butcher, 2 husbandmen
1600–1649	8 yeoman, 1 weaver, 4 labourers, 1 miller, 1 carpenter, 1 husbandman, 1 tailor, 1 blacksmith.
1650–1699	10 yeoman, 1 shepherd, 1 cordwainer, 1 weaver, 1 labourer, 2 spinsters, 1 thatcher, 3 butchers, 1 maltster, 1 husbandman, 1 tailor
1831	89 in agriculture, 16 in retail trade, 2 professionals, 5 in domestic service, 4 others
1844	Cattle dealer, victualler, shopkeeper/carrier, bricklayer, collar maker, schoolmaster, grocer/drapers/shoemaker, shoemaker, blacksmith, surgeon, wheelwright, 10 farmers, beerhouse keeper
1912	Sub-postmaster, schoolmistress, 4 farmers, blacksmith, publican, shopkeeper, wheelwright/carpenter, harness maker, cycle repairer, farm bailiff, head gardener, beer retailer/carrier, boot maker, grocer, overseer, sausage maker, tailor Blacksmiths shop and forge, partially demolished 1968

19. Education:

1818	1 Sunday school (37 attend) also held 1 evening per week 1 village school (21 attend)
1833	1 endowed Sunday School (52 attend), 2 daily schools (35 attend) National school built 1835 (60 day scholars and 100 Sunday scholars attend), average attendance 1912 55 School Board established 1876

20. Poor relief:

1776	£53. 12s. 0d.
1803	£250. 19s. 10d.
1818	£480. 6s. 0d.
1830	£427. 3s. 0d.
1832	£379. 7s. 0d.
1834	£342. 6s. 0d.

21. Charities:

Church Land

1814	Allotment of 7 acres 2R 12P granted at enclosure and applied to clerk's wages and church repairs.
1840	These premises (together with a further 2 acres 2R 12P) let at £15 p.a. £2 p.a. is paid to parish clerk, £6 p.a. to Sunday schoolmistress, residue to church purposes and poor relief

22. Other institutions:

1951	Women's Institute had 18 members
1960's	Women's Institute and Youth Club reported as closing through lack of support

23. Recreation:

1844 The Oak public house, 1 beerhouse
1891/1912 The Royal Oak public house, 1 beerhouse/retailer

24. Personal:

John Lydgate born in Lidgate 1375, died 1440/1461, learned monk of Bury St. Edmunds (highest point of fame c.1430.) Ordained Subdeacon 1389, Deacon 1393 and Priest 1397. Appointed court poet and wrote a ballad for the coronation of Henry VI 1422. For eleven years, 1423–1434, he was prior of Hatfield Broadoak, Travelled widely in France and Italy. Composed poetry in the vernacular. Account of his life in 'The Lidgate Mystery' by P.M. Hollingsworth p.12/13 (pub. 1951).

25. Other information:

Reputed site of church at 'Church Hole'.

Bricked well spring situated at Springfield.

'Lidgate' collection of memories donated by Harry Mott.

Lidgate branded in local press as 'faithless' at closure of Congregational Church 1962, also accused in the press of apathy in the 1960's. The article states that there is no doctor, no shops, no church, no school and buses to Newmarket and Bury St. Edmunds only pass through twice a week.

However, church and school were still in existence c.1960.

Unnamed house Grade II listed 14th cent. building.

Ancient child's skull found in Lidgate Brook 1986.

Survey of estate in parish 1582 – Victoria County History Vol. I, p. 663.

Castle: mount and bailey fortification, known as King John's castle, part moated, origins unknown. Plan in Victoria County History Vol. I, p.600/601.

'The Lidgate Mystery', by P.M. Hollingsworth, 1951.

Reginald de Scanceler gave parish into care of monks of Bury St. Edmunds on his departure for the crusades 1110.

Evidence to suggest the village was formerly much larger and stretched towards Wickhambrook.

Evidence of Roman occupation

John Lydgate describes village as 'famous castel (sic) town'

Memory of ecclesiastical land and probably buildings remain in field names i.e. 'Bushable' (Bishops Hall), Bishop Hall gate, Bishop Hall Meadow.

Some evidence for belief that a high rate of infant mortality existed in the parish 17/18th cent.

The Star public house (possibly beerhouse mentioned above) has underground passage leading to adjacent cottages (purpose unknown).

Suffolk House contains mysterious hiding place (unexplained).

House called Cropley Park burned down (date unknown).

'John Lydgate's House', by J. Rushen. East Anglian Magazine Vol. 38, p.233.

1 case of incendiarism due to agrarian unrest 1844.