

1. Parish: Westleton

Meaning: Vestlioi'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 (1893–1934), Blyth RD (1934–1974), Suffolk Coastal DC (1974–)

Other administrative details:

Blything Petty Sessional Division
Halesworth County Court District

3. Area: 6,122 acres land (2,000 acres of which is sandy heath) (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. Some deep peat soils associated with clay over sandy soils. High groundwater levels, risk of flooding by river.

5. Types of farming:

1086		Wood for 7 pigs, 4 acres meadow, 3 cattle, 20 pigs, 60 sheep, 24 goats, 2 beehives.
1500–1640	Thirsk:	Sheep-corn region, sheep main fertilising agent, bred 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:	Wheat, barley, beans, peas, roots, rye, potatoes
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:

7. Settlement:

1958/82 River Minsmere forms natural boundary to south. Vast areas of heathland occupy eastern sector of parish. Large compact development around area called 'Village Green' and church. Scattered farms
Inhabited houses: 1674 – 47, 1801 – 138, 1851 – 204, 1871 – 217, 1901 – 193, 1951 – 190, 1981 – 216

8. Communications:

Road: To Blythburgh, Darsham, Middleton and Dunwich

Rail: 3 miles Darsham station: Ipswich–Lowestoft line, opened 1859, still operational.

9. Population:

1086 – 44 recorded
1327 – 43 taxpayers paid £4
1524 – 32 taxpayers paid £5 2s 2d
1603 – 120adults
1674 – 62 households
1676 – Not recorded
1801 – 661 inhabitants
1831 – 884 inhabitants
1851 – 993 inhabitants
1871 – 899 inhabitants
1901 – 755 inhabitants
1931 – 659 inhabitants
1951 – 552 inhabitants
1971 – 498 inhabitants
1981 – 501 inhabitants

10. Benefice: Vicarage (with Fordley)

Church appropriated to Sibton Abbey 1145. see Sibton Cartulary p. 87
1254 Valued £26 13s 4d
1591 Valued £28
1535 Valued £8
1603 Valued £8
1650 Valued £48
1831 Glebe house in Fordley. Joint gross income £570 p.a. Incumbent also holds Perpetual Curacy of Peasenhall.
1843 Parsonage house repaired and enlarged
1844 Great tithes commuted for £690 p.a., small tithes for £325 p.a. Incumbent resides in Yoxford.
17 acres glebe
Consolidated with Middleton and Fordley (–1861)
1891 Neat residence

1912 Nett value £206. 1.5 acres glebe and residence

Patrons: Sir Edward Coke (1603), Robert Riddington (1650), N. icklewaite (1831), Rev. H. Packard (1844), Church Patronage Society (1891)

11. Church St Peter (thatched)
(Chancel, nave, S. porch, base of W. tower and steeple)

1086 Church + 20 acres, valued 40d. Church + 3 acres
c.1300–1340 Entirely rebuilt
15th cent. Wall crosses chancel
1770 Tower fell in and present tower built on original foundations

Seats: 350 (1912)

12. Nonconformity etc:

1597 2 persons have not received communion for 12 months
Primitive Methodist chapel built 1835, rebuilt 1868/71, closed 20th cent. incorporated into wheelwrights yard.

13. Manorial:

Westleton Manor

1066 Manor of 4 carucates held by Aki a free man
1086 Manor of 4 carucates belonging to Robert Malet and held by Gilbert Blunt
1264 William de Criketot owns (linked to Middleton, Ixworth, Langham, Walsham le Willows and Great Ashfield)
1298 Peter de Donswico owns
1391 Sir Robert Swillington died seised (linked to Westhall, Wissett, Yoxford, Blythburgh, Middleton, Walsham le Willows)
c.1428 Sir George Hopton owns (linked to Westhall)
1592 Robert Brooke owns (linked to Yoxford and Henstead)
18/19th cent. Sir Charles Blois owns (linked to South Cove and Swilland)
1855 H.S. Montagu owns
1909 S. Patteson owns

Sub-manors

Westleton Grange

1299 Sibton Abbey owns
1536 Thomas, Duke of Norfolk owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)
1537 John Soone owns (linked to Wantisden and Chillisford)

1547 Edmund Rouse owns (linked to Hitcham)
 1551 John Harbottle owns (linked to Crowfield)
 1651 John Fiske owns (linked to Norton)
 1710 Mary Woods owns
 1852 H.S. Montagu owns (annexed to main manor)
 1885 Lord Huntingfield owns (linked to Sibton and Walpole)
 1909 G.F. Beaumont owns
 Custom of Borough English prevails

Minsmere/Scot's Hall

1264 Richard le Scott owns
 1363 Peter Bedingfield owns
 c.1583 Coke family owns
 1777 Sir Joshua Vanneck owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)
 1885 Lord Huntingfield owns (annexed to Westleton Grange)
 1896 Charles Capon owns (linked to Rumburgh, Earl Soham, Old Newton)
 1909 Edwin M. Caines owns

Lenwade's/Lembalde's/Lymbolds

13th cent. Thomas de Lymworth owns
 14th cent. Thomas de Hemington owns
 1377 Sir Robert de Swillington owns (absorbed by main manor)

Claydon's

1330 William Claydon died seised (linked to Farnham and Orford)
 c.1370s Sir Robert Swillington owns (absorbed by main manor)

Westleton, Cleeve's/Cliff's, Hernethorne

1316 Augustine del Clif of Dunwich owns
 1374/5 Peter Codon owns
 1425 William Cheston owns
 1484 Thomas Wetherby owns
 1504 Sir Thomas Howard owns (annexed to Westleton Grange)
 1506 William Jenny owns (linked to Gisleham, Herringfleet and Middleton)
 c.1528 John Bokele owns
 1569 John Reeve owns
 1582 Richard Soane owns
 1599 William Bence owns
 1714 William Ingham owns
 1770 John Garneys owns
 1809 Elizabeth Woodcock owns
 1827 Richard Girling owns

1896 Henry E. Garrod owns (linked to Laxfield, Wilby and Weybread)

Valeins

1228 Walter de Valcynes owns
13th cent. William de Valence owns (Earl of Pembroke) (linked to Reydon, Exning, Mutford and Offton)

Rysings

1300 John de Rysing owns
c.1370s Sir Robert Swillington owns (absorbed by main Manor)

14. Markets/Fairs

15. Real property:

1844 £2,987 rental value
1891 £4,488 rateable value
1912 £4,036 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844–1912 Land sub-divided

17. Resident gentry:

1891 Rev. F.H. Nichols MA

18. Occupations:

1550–1549 1 husbandman, 1 yeoman, 1 blacksmith
1550–1599 5 husbandmen, 5 yeomen, 1 bricklayer, 1 weaver, 1 labourer
1600–1649 12 husbandmen, 13 yeomen, 1 turner, 2 weavers, 1 tailor, 1 thatcher, 1 minstrel
1650–1699 4 husbandmen, 13 yeomen, 1 labourer, 1 tailor, 1 clerk, 2 spinsters, 1 tanner
1831 173 in agriculture, 1 in manufacture, 48 in retail trade, 2 professionals, 26 in domestic service, 6 others
1844 Schoolmistress, beerhouse keeper, tailor, police officer, victualier, dressmaker, schoolmaster, baker, 2 straw hat makers, saddler, 3 blacksmiths, 6 boot/shoemakers, 2 bricklayers, 3 corn millers, 12 farmers, 2 joiners, 4 shopkeepers, 2 wheelwrights
1912 Sub–postmaster, schoolmaster and mistress, police officer, butcher, blacksmith, grocer, vermin destroyer, corn/coal dealer, 9 farmers, wheelwright, 2 bootmakers, publican, grocer/drapery, insurance agent, 3 shopkeepers, carpenter, grazier, gamekeeper, beer retailer

19. Education:

1833 Vicar teaches children (1597)
3 daily schools (49 attend)
National school built in 1842, 170 attend in 1891. Public Elementary school since 1888, clock erected in 1887, 137 average attendance in 1912, 30 attend in 1967

20. Poor relief:

1776 £99 5s. 6d.
1803 £183 2s. 3¹/₄d.
1818 £420 16s.
1830 £636 14s.
1832 £778 5s.
1834 £800 16s.

21. Charities:

Grimsby's Charity

1722 by will of Thomas Grimsby: 12 acres let at £16 applied to clothing material for poor widows

Church lands

1912 18.5 acres let in 72 allotments for £22 p.a. applied to church repairs and expenses

22. Other institutions:

1674 7 persons housed in Town House
1844 Police officer recorded
1851 2 nurses
1885 Library established
20th cent. Library closed, converted to small museum

23. Recreation:

1606 Minstrel recorded
1844/1912 1 beerhouse/ beer retailer, The Crown public house
Former inn: The Royal Oak (no dates)
The White Horse public house rebuilt 1898

24. Personal:

25. Other information:

Site of hall believed to be near Old Hall farm and field. Described as a barn 1851.

Winners of best kept vilage 1976.

Village sign erected on new site 1960s.

'Smugglers Hall', by J. Wentworth Day, extracts from Country Life magazine 1952 in parish folder (RO).

Known as Springlays Farm. Contained secret storage place to rear of brick bread oven and chamber under the kitchen floor.

'Westleton: From the 1830s to the 1960s: Survey of a Suffolk Village', edited by A. Ivimey 1968.

Parish formerly held 3 mills 1851: a. on the Mill Mound by the Green
b. and c. on the moor.

Town Well situated on the Green 1851.

'A Case of Delayed Appropriation' by Rev. A.H. Denney (refers to Westleton Grange; belonged to Sibton Abbey and Westleton Church). Suffolk Review Vol 1, p.11.

'Westleton Church', PSIA Vol VII, p.240.

Case of agrarian unrest due to Swing Riots 1830s.