

1. Parish: Southwold

Meaning: Southern wood

2. **Hundred:** Blything

Deanery: Dunwich (-1868), Dunwich (North) (1868-1914), N. Dunwich (1914-1972), Halesworth (1972-)

Union: Blything

RDC/UDC: (E. Suffolk) Southwold Borough/MB (-1974), Waveney D.C. (1974-)

Other administrative details:

Included as chapelry of Reydon, some parochial rights from 15th cent. separate civil parish status early, separate ecclesiastical parish status 1752

Civil boundary change 1934

Southwold Borough Petty Sessional Division

Halesworth County Court District

3. **Area:** 611 acres land, 9 acres tidal water, 25 acres foreshore (1912)

4. **Soils:**

Mixed:

- a. Deep well drained sandy soils, some very acid, risk wind erosion
- b. Mainly deep well drained calcareous/non calcareous sandy soils. Shingle bars and spits, risk wind erosion
- c. Deep stoneless mainly calcareous clay soils, flat land, risk of flooding by river

5. **Types of farming:**

1086		4 acres meadow, 1 cob, 4 cattle, 3 pigs, 30 sheep, half of a sea-weir and 4 th part of another ½ sea-weir
1500-1640	Thirsk:	25,000 herring paid to the abbot Sheep-corn region, sheep main fertilizing 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:	Not recorded
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:

1976 River Blyth forms natural boundary to south and Buss Creek forms similar boundary to north and west with the sea to the east.
Small coastal town development. Church centrally situated. Marsh and common occupy majority of western sector.

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 139, 1801 – 266 , 1851 – 501, 1871 – 494, 1901 – 658, 1951 – 866, 1981 – 845

8. Communications:

Road:

Roads to Reydon and Walberswick
1844 Carriers to Halesworth and Norwich Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday
to Yarmouth Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday
to Wangford and Beccles Monday, Thursday, Saturday
1891 Carriers to Wangford, Blythburgy, Darsham and Lowestoft daily
to Yarmouth Friday
1912 Carriers to Lowestoft, Wangford and Blythburgh daily
Omnibus to and from Lowestoft (runs according to the season)

Rail:

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

Water:

River Blyth: navigable to Halesworth 1761 silted up.
River Blyth Ferry Co. Ltd, formed 1885 (crosses to Walberswick) said to transport over 60,000 passengers per year 1891
Belle steamers call on way from London, Clacton and Yarmouth 1912

9. Population:

1086 – 9 recorded
1327 – 21 taxpayers paid £2 9s. 6d.
1524 – 115 taxpayers paid £25 11s. 2d.
1603 – Dangerous sickness in town:
Incumbent did not appear

1674 – 200 households
 1676 – Not recorded
 1801 – 1,054 inhabitants
 1831 – 1,875 inhabitants
 1851 – 2,109 inhabitants
 1871 – 2,155 inhabitants
 1901 – 2,800 inhabitants
 1931 – 2,753 inhabitants
 1951 – 2,473 inhabitants
 1971 – 1,998 inhabitants
 1981 – 1,803 inhabitants

10. Benefice: Parochial Chapel (-1751), Perpetual Curacy (1831)

1254 Valued £13 6s. 8d. (includes Reydon)
 1291 Valued £24 (includes Reydon)
 1535 Valued £13 6s. 8d. (includes Reydon)
 1650 Valued £10
 1751 Separated from Reydon with the aid of £400 from Queen Anne's Bounty
 1831 No glebe house. Gross income £200 p.a.
 1835 Valued £60
 1891 Valued £100 p.a. Commodious residence. Incumbancy vacant
 1912 Nett value £162, 1 acre glebe and residence

Patrons: Sir John Rous (1650), Earl of Stradbroke (1831), Simeon's Trust (1891)

11. Church St. Edmund

(Chancel, clerestoried nave of 7 bays, aisles, S. porch, W. tower)

1st chapel believed built in reign of King John by Thetford Priory (patrons of Church of Reydon of which Southwold was a hamlet)

Chapel of ease under domination of Reydon
 c.1254–1751

1460–1490 Built on site of earlier building which was destroyed by fire c.1430
 (144' long, tower: 100' tall). Tudor S. doors have heavy linenfold paneling.

10. Benefice (cont'd):

1643/44 Puritanical Vandals (William Dowsing) destroyed 130 superstitious pictures, 4 crosses on the corners of the vestry. Ordered removal of 13 cherubim, 20 angels and font cover. However great deal of ornamentation survives.
 1867 Restoration of roof

1930s Restorations
1942 Window glass almost entirely replaced after bomb blast (1934)

Note: Under chancel is Med.chamber 54" x 39" believed to be for acoustics

Seats: 1,100 (1915)

12. Nonconformity etc:

1597 Vicar does not catechise or wear the surplice
c.1659 Group of Independent believers in existence.
Independent/congregational group formed 1695 chapel built 1837, seats 500 1912
'Southwold': History of Congretationalism in Suffolk', by T.J. Hosken (1920), p.166
Fish-house converted into meeting house c.1748
242 Anglicans and 166 Protestant Dissenters in the town 1760
Baptist chapel built 1821, not recorded 1912
Wesleyan chapel built 1835 at East Green, seats 300 1912, closed by 1974
1891 Iron Mission Room, Stradbroke Road
1912 Plymouth Brethren meet in hall in Manor Park Road, seats 70
Roman Catholic church of the Sacred Heart in existence

Note: Daniel Defoe noted that the church congregation of only 27 while the Dissenters' meeting houses were full 1722
'Buildings of England: Suffolk', by N. Pevsner, p.430

13. Manorial:

Southwold Manor

1066/1086 Manor of 1 carucate belonging to Abbot of St. Edmunds for monks supplies
1259 Manor exchanged for the Manor of Mildenhall, the transaction being between the Abbot and Richard de Clare
1338 Portion annexed to Priory of Wangford
1360 Theobald de Verdon died seised
1504 Incorporated into Queen's Demesne Revenue
Further information is limited due to the loss of the Court Rolls in the fire of 1659

14. Markets/Fairs

1222	Grant of market to Abbot of St. Edmunds
1226/27	Grant of market and fair to be held on eve and day of St. Philip and St. Jacob (30 th April)
1490	Permission granted to hold a 2 nd fair. Fairs held: Trinity Fair (3 days following Trinity Sunday), St. Bartholomews Fair (held in front of church on Bartholomews Green 24 th August)
1504	Charter given for 2 weekly markets (one held on Monday) and 2 annual fairs
1618/19	Market held on Thursday. Fair held on Bartholomews Day
1659	Fire destroyed market place and market hall
1679	Market on Thursday of 'ordinary trade'
1844	Market held Thursday. 2 annual fairs held on Trinity Monday and September 4 th Fair held on Trinity Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday for pleasure 1885 Market held on Monday and Thursday 1888
1891	Fair on Trinity Monday for pleasure Market for provisions held Thursday in summer season
1912	Fair on Trinity Monday and 2 following days. Herring market built on the wharf

15. Real property:

1844	£1,849 rental value
1891	£8,751 rateable value
1912	£16,290 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844–1891	Land sub-divided
1912	Corporation of Southwold, principal owners

17. Resident gentry:

1844	Capt. H. Alexander, Sir. C. Blois, Lt. F.W. Wilson RN, Capt. C. Rayley RN, Capt. S. Spicer
1891	Sir R.B.M. Blois JP, C. Foster JP, E.M. Gannon JP, J.E. Grubbe JP and R.H. Vertue JP, MRCS, LSA
1912	Rev. W.J. Badcock MA, Col. P. Bagot, H.M. Hart-Smith BA, MB, E.A. Holmes JP, Rev. J.L. Puddell BA and Rev. C.H. Sutton MA

18. Occupations:

1550–1549	9 sailor/mariner/seamen, 1 boatwright/shipwright, 3 tailors, 2 merchants, 2 smiths, 1 wax chandler
1550–1599	28 sailor/mariner/seamen, 3 coopers, 6 yeomen, 8 boatwright/shipwrights, 1 tailor, 1 preacher/priest, 5

- merchants, 1 carpenter, 1 roper/rope maker, 1 baker, 1 scrivener
- 1600–1649 26 sailor/mariner/seamen, 4 coopers, 1 turner, 9 yeomen, 1 boatwright/shipwright, 3 tailors, 1 preacher/priest, 2 shoemaker/cordwainers, 4 merchants, 2 millers, 2 carpenter, 1 butcher, 3 bakers, 1 housewright, 1 gelder, 1 joiner, 2 husbandmen, 1 anchorsmith, 1 ships carpenter, 1 clerk
- 1650–1699 26 sailor/mariner/seamen, 1 spinster, 1 cooper, 5 yeomen, 3 boatwright/shipwrights, 2 glaziers, 1 shoemaker/cordwainer, 8 merchants, 1 miller, 1 hosier, 1 linen weaver, 2 carpenters, 1 roper/rope maker, 1 butcher, 1 baker, 1 bricklayer, 1 tanner, 1 beer brewer, 1 blockmaker, 1 millener, 1 joiner, 2 inn holders, 1 oatmeal maker
- 1679 Sea trade having 20/30 sayl of small vessels, chief trade is to Iceland and North Sea for cod. Coal for passage trade in cheese and butter to London. Some ship building and salt refining.
- 1831 31 in agriculture, 171 in retail trade, 46 professionals, 134 in labouring, 64 in domestic service, 22 others
- 1844 Sea port with 37 coasting vessels, bathing place and fishing station
Herring and sprat fishery, salt manufacture, 2 breweries, 2 maltings and several fish curing houses
Chief constable, clerk of the market, collector of customs, lapidary, controller of customs, smallware/toy dealer, 2 boat builders, sweep, 2 bank managers, 2 harbour masters, ship owner, brick/tile maker, watchmaker, brewer, 2 basket makers, fruiterer, carrier, coast guard officer, engraver, lime burner, horse letter, slat manufacturer, 1 bank, 7 inns/taverns, 7 academies, 2 attorneys, 2 auctioneers, 7 baker/flour dealers, 4 beerhouse keepers, 2 blacksmiths, 3 book sellers, 11 boot/shoemakers, 5 bricklayer/plasterers, 4 butchers, 2 cabinet makers, chemist, 3 coal dealers, 2 coopers, corn miller, 2 farmers, 18 fish curers, 2 gardeners, 5 grocer/drapers, 2 hairdressers, 1 ironmonger, 5 joiners, 9 lodging house owners, 2 maltsters, 33 master mariners, 3 milliners, 4 painter/plumber/glaziers, 2 rope/twin makers, saddler, 3 shopkeepers, stone/marble mason, 3 surgeons, 5 tailors, wheelwright
- 1891 Extensive salt works (warm and cold baths attached), fish curing house, Adnams Brewery, 2 malthouses, an ironfoundry and an engineering works
- 1912 Sea trade in herring, sprat, smelt, shrimps, sole and cod, mainly for the London market.
Public officers, fire brigade (capt. And 12 men), police officers, postmaster and sub-postmaster, 4 teachers, station master, brewers, 2 auctioneers, 6 grocers, hosier, 2 dairymen, greengrocer, 122 apartment house owners, 8

builders, 2 butchers, 3 antique dealers, corn merchant, 2 bankers, house/estate agents, 2 prep school owners, 2 fried fish dealers, town crier, shoeing smith, 2 jobmasters, 2 butcher/farmers, 4 hairdressers, dentist, tailor, 2 pork butchers, credit draper, twine and morsels maker, 2 watchmakers, 3 beer retailers, 7 bakers, artist, 10 hotel owners, 2 stationers, 2 dressmakers, 2 laundresses, newsagent/tobacconist, 2 electrical engineers, milliners, house furnishers, 5 solicitors, 4 carpenters, bookseller, 2 teachers of music, wine and spirit merchant, fish merchant, tailor, girls school owner, 7 publicans, grocer/draper, grocer, 4 shopkeepers, carter, cowkeeper, goods/parcels agent, 2 fruiterers, hotel manager, 2 printers, 6 bootmakers, 3 confectioners, fruiterer/greengrocer, cyclist repairer, coach builder, nursing home owner, cycle dealer, 3 boot repairers, lighthouse keeper, 2 laundries, 2 chemists, 3 surgeons, 5 bathing machine owners, 3 cabinet makers, corn dealer, architect, fancy goods dealer, decorator, saddler, 3 coal merchants, photographer, cooper, 2 fishmongers, 2 boat builders, wood carver, 3 general ironmongers, 2 bank managers, wheelwright, general draper, greengrocer, jeweller/fancy repository, customs and excise officer, 2 carriers, ferry company, oil dealer, garage/motor engineer, Home Knit Hosiery Co., manager of School of Industrial Art, boat owner, dentist, plumber, tobacconist.

19. Education:

Person teaches reading the writing 1597

Burgh School established 1816 by will of John Sayer, closed 1818 for 'want of support'.

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| 1818 | 1 day school (150 attend) |
| | National school opened 1821, discontinued 1826 |
| 1833 | 7 daily schools (243 attend), 2 day and boarding schools (39 girls attend) |
| | 1 established church Sunday school (102 attend), 1 Methodist Sunday school (130 attend), 1 Independent Sunday school (84 attend), 1 evening class (10 adults attend) |
| | Day school for poor girls opened on British and Foreign School Society system 1837 at the Independent Chapel |
| 1844 | 6 academics |
| 1891 | Boys school, The Common, run by W.G. Bridal |
| | Girls School, 3 Cumberland Terrace, run by Misses Marian and Mary Child |
| | Day school, Park Lane, run by Miss M. Maylam |
| | Day school, 3 St. James Terrace, run by Miss J. Twaddell |
| 1912 | Eversley House School: private prep school for boy boarders |

School of Industrial Art, Park Lane built 1895, 30 students attend 1912
Public Elementary school built 1856, enlarged 1895, average attendance 1912 380
Girls school, 56 High Street, run by Miss M. Denny
Prep school, 26 High Street, run by Miss C.M. Dyhouse
St. Felix School built c.1900, additions 1928–38

20. Poor relief:

1776	Not recorded
1803	£384 8s. 9¾d.
1818	£760 6s.
1830	£545 19s.
1832	£699 11s.
1834	£735 10s.

21. Charities:

Goodall's Charity:

1540 by will of William and Margaret Goodall:
Land called Skilman's Marsh let to the poor, valued £6 13s. 3d. p.a. Profits to maintenance of priest

Walter's Gift

1589 Devised by Matthew Walter: rent charge of £1 p.a. (lost)

Poor and Town Estate:

1840 Interest on £200 for use of the poor

Poor's Funds:

1840 £144 12s. 3d. interest on for use of the poor
Interest of £150 given by John Steel for benefit of poor widows

Sayers Charity:

1816 by will of John Sayer: Dividends on £200
Consols applied to education (the Burgh School)

22. Other institutions:

Workhouse: built on lands of Town Farm 1738, retiled 1758, pulled down 1774, replaced by Small Pox Hospital
Guild of St. Margaret and St. Mary c.1459
Free British Fishery established 1750
Borough Gaol built 1819

Borough governed by mayor, 4 aldermen and 12 councillors 1844
 Petty Sessions at Town Hall on Thursdays 1844, held on Wednesday 1912
 Town Hall: also used as police station, was built to replace the Guildhall
 c.1815
 Guildhall formerly situated in front of church, taken down 1815
 Market Cross taken down and sold 1809
 H.M. Custom House officers 1844
 3 pilot boats and lifeboat stationed at Southwold
 Casino: built 1800 used as subscription news room 1844
 Medical and Surgical Institution established 1837 with attached dispensary
 (self supporting)
 Gas Works built 1848, gas holders built 1880, serves 45 street lamps
 1891
 Water Works Co. Ltd., formed 1890, operates tower and windmill on
 common.
 Lighthouse (North Cliff): built 1890, replacing former lighthouse at Orford
 Ness
 Coastguard station (11 officers) 1891
 Sailors Reading Room established 1842 in former lifeboat house. Building
 on East Cliff built 1864
 Drill Hall established in former malt house c.1837
 New Hall, Queen Street built 1865
 Fire Brigade established 1883, consists of 10 men
 Freemasons Lodge 'Martyn' meets 2nd Friday in every month 1891
 St. Barnabas Home of Rest for Ladies founded 1897
 Cottage Hospital founded 1897, situated in new premises with 13 bed
 capacity 1903
 Nursing Home at Avenue House run by Miss F.M. Gibbs 1912
 Southwold Conservative Association 1912
 Southwold Constitutional Club Ltd. 1912
 Southwold Electric Supply 1912
 Southwold Harbour Co.
 Southwold Liberal Association
 Southwold Railway Co.
 Southwold Museum housed in Dutch cottage facing the church (possible
 weavers cottage) donated to the town 1932, opened 1933

23. Recreation:

	2 inn holders 1683 and 1696, 1 beer brewer 1699 recorded
	8 inns and alehouses 1765/66
1844	The Crown Hotel and The old Swan and Royal Hotel (formerly the Kings Head 1743) The Fishing Buss (formerly The Harbour Inn 1766), The Kings Head, The Lord Nelson, The Pilot Boat and The Red Lion public houses Note: The Red Lion dates from 1672
	4 beerhouses
1891	Common used for lawn tennis, golf and cricket 5 beerhouses

The Centre Cliff, The Lord Nelson, The Crown, The Harbour, The Southwold Arms (formerly The Green Man 1765), The Kings Head, The Lion and The Victoria public houses
 2 refreshment rooms
 1912 The Swan Hotel and The Temperance Hotel, Centre Cliff Hotel opened 1887, The Swan Hotel, The Temperance Hotel, The Lancaster House Hotel and The Grand Hotel opened 1901 plus The Station Hotel and The Crown Hotel
 3 beer retailers
 The Southwold Arms, The Red Lion, The Lord Nelson, The Kings Head Inn, The Victoria, The Sole Bay Inn and The Harbour Inn public houses
 Bathing machines
 Golf Club
 Quoits Club

Other public houses: The New Swan (formerly The Crown 1766), The Two Brewers (Church Street 1766), The Nags Head (formerly The Victoria 1765), The White Lion 1656

24. Personal:

James Maggs: (1797–1890), native of Southwold, schoolmaster, auctioneer and diarist
 'The Southwold Diary of James Maggs (1818–1876) (2 volumes)
 Agnes Strickland (1796–1874), lived in Southwold (25, Park Lane) and Reydon
 'Agnes Strickland and her birthplace', by E.R. Cooper. PSIA Vol. XXIV, p.33.
 East Anglian Notes and Queries, new Series Vol. X, p.291.
 Authoress of 'Queens of England'.
 George Orwell: lived in Southwold (Montague House) (1903–1950), author of Animal Farm and Nineteen-Eighty-Four.

25. Other information:

Corporation regalia contains 2 maces dated 1642.

Town pump dated 1873.

Lighthouse dated 1890. Has become a well-known landmark.

Harbour: piers flanking mouth of river built 1749 and 1752 lengthened 1905.

Further pier built 1900.

Black Shore Quay: lengthened and repaired at entrance to Buss Creek 1805.

Southwold Bay (otherwise Sole Bay): remembered for naval engagement between the combined English/French fleets against the Dutch 1672.

Town described as having sea to the east, harbour to the south and river with drawbridge to the west 1679.

Every poor man pays for his Cowgate (grazing) 1s. 8d. p.a. 1546. Court Rolls are believed to have either been embezzled or destroyed in the fire of 1659. This fire destroyed the town hall, market hall, market place, prison, shops, warehouses, graneries, buildings and 238 dwelling houses. The loss estimated at £40,000. 300 families made destitute.

Richard de Clare obtained licence to convert his house in Southwold into a Castle 1260. Skilmans Hill is said to be the site.

Town created a free burgh or corporation 1490. Governed by 2 bailiffs, A recorder and other 'inferior officers'.

Conferred with the privilege of admiralty valued £14 p.a. and the rights of haven which effectively transferred the port domination from Dunwich to Southwold. Corporation consists 20th cent. of mayor, 4 aldermen, councilmen, town clerk and borough treasurer. 6 gun mountings existed at 2 batteries situated on the cliffs 1844. Six 18-pounders were presented to the Corporation 1745. Known as Gun Hill.

Ancient encampment said to exist at Eye Cliff (local tradition says it was occupied by the Danes)

Sea wall erected 1890 and 1882 to prevent sea erosion. Further protection added 1900 and 1907 following storm damage.

Parish anciently known as 'Sudwald' or 'Southwood'.

World War I: Town was bombed by Zeppelins 1916.

Stocks were preserved at the Town Hall 1909, last used 1856, replica stands by churchyard wall.

Sutherland House, High Street: Royal residence and Headquarters of Duke of York (later James II) from 1666-1672.

Market Cross demolished 1809, said to date 1661, position marked by the Town Pump.

'The Battle of Sole Bay', by D. Erskine 1972.

'Southwold Suffolk: The Fortified Anchorage of Sole Bay', by J.I. Carter and S.R. Bacon 1976.

Black Shore Inn: said to be haunt of smugglers 18th cent.

Many of the inhabitants were evacuated 1939–45. Most of the sea front was damaged, 77 buildings destroyed.

The Green system is said to result from the fire of 1659. Whipping post stood on the green outside the church.

Former Salt Office (The Cottage, South Green) occupied this site –1902 when it was demolished, although the arms of the Salt Office are still visible. However this has also been suggested as the old Town Hall. Spinners Lane was where the rope was spun.

Mights Bridge: site of former drawbridge. Bridges have been recorded here 1227, 1588, 1783, 1898 and 1926.

‘A Short History of The Borough of Southwold’, by A.F. Bottomley.

‘People at War (1914–1918)’ edited by Michael Moynihan 1973.

‘The Southwold Diary of James Maggs 1818–1848 and 1848–1876’ edited by A. Bottomley 1983.

‘Southwold and its Vicinity’, by R. Wake 1839.

‘Story of Southwold’ edited by M.J. Becker 1948. Contains photographs of salt mill and bath house 1900 established 1660.

The Southwold Jack-o-the-clock: figure in armour ready to strike a bell (preserved in the church).

‘Round Southwold’, by C.R.B. Barrett 1892.

‘Southwold: St. Edmund’s offshore Island’. Suffolk in the Middle Ages by N. Scarfe 1986, p.125.

‘The Records of Southwold’, by the Rev. W.D. Macray. Historical Manuscripts

Commission Report Vol. VIII 1914, p.114.

‘Southwold Church’, PSIA Vol. VIII, p.413.

Vestiges of Roman Colonization discovered in the neighbourhood of

Southwold’ by J.E. Grubbe. PSIA Vol. VII, p.303.

‘Old Time Saltworks in Suffolk’, by E.R. Cooper. PSIA Vol. XXIV, p.25.

‘Screenwork in the County in Suffolk: Southwold’, by Rev. W.W. Lillie PSIA Vol. XXII, p.120.

‘Southwold St. Edmund’, PSIA Vol. IV, p.450.

'Southwold in the 16th century'. East Anglian Notes and Queries Vol. 3, p.49.

'Some Suffolk Door Knockers', by I.E. Broadhead. Suffolk Fair (December 1979), p.30.