

Cottesmore Round



We hope this leaflet helps you to see the village in a historic light, with its 27 listed buildings and 800 years of history

Records show that there has been a settlement in Cottesmore since the mid 11th century, its current name originating from Cotts Moor, and so correctly pronounced Cotts'more. Set in Rutland, England's smallest county, Cottesmore is its third largest parish settlement, and is known for the famous Cottesmore Hunt. Cottesmore was already a flourishing village at the time of the Domesday survey in 1086, probably under the name of Goda's Moor, since at the time of Edward the Confessor a man called Goda held 3 carucates of land there (a carucate being the area of land to be ploughed in a day by a team of 8 oxen). For many years the area was devoted mainly to agriculture, and later also to ironstone quarrying. Until fairly recently the village was primarily part of the extensive Exton estate, owned by the Noel family, the Earls of Gainsborough. Until the early 1900s the village possessed a stream, the Rundle, running the length of Main Street. Bit by bit it was piped and buried underground.

The village walk starts in front of **The Sun Inn (1)** public house in Main Street. The Sun Inn is a Grade II listed building with a thatched roof, and dates from the 17th/early 18th Century. It would have been an important inn on the Oakham to Greetham turnpike, which passed through the village.

It is believed that there was a Malt House at the rear of the premises. In the kitchen of The Sun there used to be a pump; this was one of the few sources of water in the village prior to mains water arriving in the 1950s.



In 1899 the tenant was Richard T Benstead who had married Alice True Neve. Their niece was Ethel Le Neve; Ethel often visited Cottesmore and later became the mistress of Dr Crippen, who murdered his wife and absconded with Ethel on an ocean liner to Canada, where they were apprehended. The case is famous for being the first where a murderer was caught by means of radio communication between shore and ship.

On the corner of Main Street and The Leas is **Holly Cottage, No. 27 Main Street**. This Grade II listed cottage dates from the 18th Century and has a Collyweston slate roof. To the rear is a full-length outbuilding with catslide Collyweston slate roof. The Blands of Blands Coaches used to live here. On the green near the inn there are two memorial benches, one of which is dedicated to the Bland family.

Turn right up The Leas (previously known as School Lane and before that Hacks Lane).

It is understood that at the back of The Leas is the site of a medieval “Shrunken Village”.

Continuing up The Leas, past Gainsborough Court, (built on the site of what was Elye’s Farm), and on your right you will come to **No. 5 The Leas, The Old School House**. Behind this was the old brick- built school, with just one room initially and an outside toilet. Many of the local residents still remember going there, and their memories have been recorded by Cottesmore History and Archaeology Group.

In the gardens of **No. 21 The Leas** a Neolithic polished stone axe was found. It was officially recorded, though the person who found it was allowed to keep it. It has now been taken out of the village.

No. 12 The Leas, The Leas House, formerly the Old House, is one of the oldest buildings in Cottesmore. This is a house of 1710 with 19th Century alterations, formerly 3 cottages. It has a Welsh slate roof and over the porch is a stone tablet with “Thomas Jackson 1710”. Further along The Leas is

Bee Cottage No. 23 The Leas (2).

At one time this was used for the weekly visit of the doctor.

Granny Ireland ran a sweet shop, now demolished, in front of **Fox Cottage No. 27 The Leas (3)**. At the back there used to be stabling. Next door is **Fountain’s Cottage**; this is named after Dick Fountain, a carpenter who specialised in making coffins.

Turn right out of The Leas. On the corner is **No. 45 Main Street, Cob Cottage**. This is a Grade II listed thatched cottage built in the 18th century, it was once two cottages. In the 1930s the cottage was used as a surgery for a weekly visiting doctor. Villagers used to pay sixpence a week into the “Sick and Divided Club”, through which you received payment when you were sick, with any surplus “divided” out at Christmas.

Next door is **Dick’s Cottage, No. 47 Main Street (4)**, also a Grade II listed thatched cottage, now a holiday cottage, named after Dick Stafford, a farm labourer. At one time this used to be three cottages. **No. 53 Main Street** is a Grade II Listed thatched cottage from the 17th - early 18th Century.



St Nicholas' Church

Next door, **No. 55 Main Street, The Faulklands** is a Grade II Listed 18th Century thatched cottage which used to be three cottages. One of the village's Faulkner families lived in one of them, hence its name. In the front is a small cottage which used to be an old wash house, as a small brick built 'lean to' rather than a cottage. There are only two cottages now, the one next to the main road and the middle one having been joined together. **No. 59 Main Street** is another Grade II listed thatched cottage from the 18th Century. (It can be seen through the garden of **No. 55**).

Manor Farm (5) is the only remaining farm in the village, where once there were seven. Adjacent is a pair of semi-detached houses with the date 1883, a coronet and the letter "G" on a plaque. This is a reference to Lord Gainsborough.

Turn right up the extension of Main Street until you reach the entrance to **Cottesmore Grange (6)**. The Grange is a 3-storey house dating from 1811, Grade II listed with a Welsh slate roof and coursed squared stone construction and a moulded stone central ridge. The original site was 160 acres, stretching from Main Street, including The Pastures housing estate, all the way south towards the Exton Road junction with Bridle Lane. The 1811 building was about a third of its current size, and it was later extended with two gables added in around 1831 and 1840.

In the grounds of The Grange there is the site of a leper hospital of St Giles circa. 1266, but no remains exist. In the 19th Century the Grange gained fame as the home of Richard Westbrook Baker (1797 – 1861), the Exton Estate manager, who also became Rutland High Sheriff in 1842 and was renowned for his service to agriculture and his efforts to improve the condition of farm labourers.

Acting as agent for Lord Gainsborough, he originated the Small Allotment System in 1830; to encourage "industrious habits" among the poor, a competition was held annually for the best kept plot. His connection to Cottesmore is further reflected by naming the new **Cottesmore Allotments**, which were opened in March 2021, after him. These are located on land to the north, off Rogues Lane. He was famous in Rutland for inventing the Rutland Plough (a replica of which can be seen in the Rutland County Museum in Oakham).

Note: You can see part of the front elevation of Cottesmore Grange by walking a little way along Exton Road after its junction with Greetham Road but be careful as there is no continuous footpath.



Cottesmore Grange (6)

Return to Main Street and turn right.

A pair of semi-detached buildings, **Honeypot Cottage, No. 77 Main Street (7)** and its neighbour **Sticky End, No. 73 Main Street** are two thatched cottages from the 18th Century, with Honeypot a Grade II Listed Building. Originally probably built for farm workers, this has an L-shaped design, with a thatched roof and coarse rubble stone construction. The main oak beams in its construction have been accurately dated to being felled in 1782, which suggests the cottage was built shortly after this. To the side of this property was the area once known as '**Tap Yard**', another of the locations where villagers could come for their water. It was also here that one of the five air raid shelters in the village was located.



Sticky End

After a few yards turn right through the wooden gate, cross the grassed area and bear left through the wooden gate at the other side until you come out on to Toll Bar. Cross the road.

No. 21 Toll Bar (8) is the old **Police House**, and the separate public entrance can still be seen. A single-storey toll cottage once stood on the site of 11 & 12 Toll Bar, but was demolished in the 1930s. Mrs McCrow was the last occupant, and it is said that hunting folk, on returning to the village, would jump over into the adjoining field to avoid paying the toll. Children walking from Greetham to school in Cottesmore were convinced she was a witch, and would walk miles round the toll to avoid crossing her path.

Leading off to the right now is Rogues Lane; this strange name is said to originate from the 1880s, after a travellers' camp was set up there, although there is no evidence of the truth of this.



Toll Bar Cottage
Dem. 1930s

The road leads to Kendrew Barracks (now an Army base), but between 1938 and 2011 RAF Cottesmore. The station had a long and distinguished service history, housing at one time Victor and later Vulcan bombers; the last aircraft based there were the Harriers. Part of the way along Rogues Lane is the village cemetery extension, which also contains a number of RAF graves.

Continue now along the main road (here called Hall Close), past Colin Easson's garage and petrol station on your right. Before 1976 this was the location of Cottesmore Tractor Motors. Next turn right into Mill Lane, and you soon reach (on the right) some of the outbuildings of Cottesmore Hall, now converted into residential accommodation. At one time an enclosed horse exercise ring stood in the centre of the courtyard in front of these houses, but this was demolished some years ago.

Continue along Mill Lane, and you are close to the site of **Cottesmore Hall (9)** which lies under the houses of Cresswell Drive and Debdale. The Hall, built at some time in the 1700s (on the site of an earlier grand building, which had been owned during the Civil War by a prominent Royalist family) was for most of its existence the property of the Noel family. However, it was for many years occupied by members of the Lonsdale family; in particular by the mother of Lord Lonsdale, the founder of the Automobile Association (and after whom the Lonsdale boxing belt is named).

The Hall was sold in 1927 to the Marquis of Bute; in the following year it was severely damaged by fire, but was then restored, and was for a time occupied by a group of nuns. A number of evacuees lived there during the early days of the Second World War, but after the war the Hall gradually fell into disrepair, and was demolished in 1974.



Cottesmore Hall (9)
Dem. 1974

Cottesmore Village



Legend

- | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. The Sun Inn | 6. Cottesmore Grange | 11. Sheepdyke (site) | 16. Holme Farm |
| 2. Bee Cottage | 7. Honeypot Cottage / Sticky End | 12. 7 Clatterpot Lane | 17. Ivy Cottage |
| 3. Fox Cottage | 8. Police House | 13. Clatterpot House | |
| 4. Dick's Cottage | 9. Cottesmore Hall (site) | 14. The Rectory | |
| 5. Manor Farm | 10. Lilac Farmhouse | 15. 20 Main Street | |

On your right you will see the **Farriers House, No. 15-17 Mill Lane**, formerly **Sunnyside**. The house is of 18th and 19th century date, and Grade II listed, with Welsh slate and pantile roofs.

At **No. 19 Mill Lane** is **Lilac Farmhouse (10)**, a part-thatched, part-slate 18th century building which is Grade II listed. The Faulkner family used to deliver the milk and papers from here by bike to the village, and also to Market Overton, Greetham and Exton. The farm was the location of another tap for the village water. In the grounds evidence was found of late Anglo-Saxon and medieval occupation. 245 sherds of pottery were uncovered, as well as iron slag and furnace lining, confirming the area was a metal working site.



Lilac Farmhouse (10)

Past the new houses built on the Lilac Farm land we come to the site of the old **Sheepdyke (11)**, the name derived from the fact that sheep used to be dipped in it. This was not just standing water, but a brick-built pond with stone edging.

This was the Cottesmore washdyke, the cottages in Sheepdyke used the water for washing and bathing. Ownership of the washdyke was shared between the local farmers. It was last used in 1950, and subsequently filled in.

On the corner you see **Nos. 37-39 Mill Lane**, Grade II listed, now one cottage, but previously two, dating from the 18th/19th century with thatched and pantile roof. Three cottages nearby were demolished in 1948 and replaced by two new houses.



Sheepdyke (11) Lost in the 50s

Cross the road and go down Mill Lane. **Nos. 16, 18 and 20 Mill Lane** are all Grade II listed thatched cottages.

No. 16 is dated 1734, with a stone tablet above the door showing "T.B.A.1734". Nos 18 and 20 are mainly 18th century, with possible 15th and 16th century origins. The current stone building is thought to have replaced the original wattle-and-daub and cruck-built dwelling. Its structure suggests it is one of the oldest houses in the village. In 1730 the tenant was Henry Lowe, and he paid an annual rent of £1 and 6 shillings.

Next you reach the **Tithe Barn**. This was originally a 100ft-long barn owned by the Church, and dates back to the 15th century. Despite the name, it is not believed the building was ever used for the collection of tithes. It was converted in 1974 using material from the hall; roof timbers for the stairs and flooring and floor tiles from the old kitchens. There was also a **Reading Room** on the site, but this has since been demolished. This Reading Room was previously used as a school, and later as the Village Hall.

Just past the Tithe Barn on the left is the entrance to the **Old Rectory/Clatterpot House** (see later). Next door is the **Old Brew House**; this is believed to have been the brewery at one point, and later the wash house for the Old Rectory.

Turn up **Clatterpot Lane**, thought to be so called because of the clattering of pots in the **Bakery**, which was situated at the end of the lane where it meets Main Street. Another possible explanation is that village ladies used to take their Sunday dinners to be cooked in the bakehouse, and the name refers to the clattering of their pots as they walked along the lane.

On the right you will pass in front of **No. 7 Clatterpot Lane (12)** a Grade II listed cottage from the 18th century with a Collyweston slate roof. Next door is the former **Primitive Methodist Chapel**. The Primitive Methodists met in various village homes, until in 1890 the shell of a thatched cottage on Clatterpot Lane was made into a chapel.



No. 7 Clatterpot Lane (12)

Services were well attended, and in 1904 a new chapel was built, funded by a local family. Congregations slowly dwindled, and it was closed in 1964, and converted into a private home in 1971. American airmen stationed locally in the war called the area Sunshine Corner.

Moving down a little further you will come to the back gate of the church. To the right is an area known as **Camphor Dyke**. Beneath your feet is part of the Rundle which runs through the village.

Continuing along Clatterpot Lane you will see on your left **Little Cottage, No. 8 Clatterpot Lane**, previously known as **Hope Cottage**. The current owners have a date plaque for the cottage from 1725. Opposite Little Cottage at one time stood two thatched cottages, but these have now been demolished, and the area is now **St Nicholas Court**. The village bakery was once housed here. As you approach Main Street, on the left there is a site, now partly occupied by a modern building, on which five small labourers' cottages once stood.

Reaching Main Street, turn left and go into the churchyard. **St Nicholas' Church** is a Grade II* listed building. The church has stood for 800 years in the centre of Cottesmore, and a church on the site is mentioned in the Domesday Book; the earliest part of the building as it now stands dates from the 12th century, the majority from the 13th and 14th. Within the church grounds stands the Cottesmore War Memorial which is also listed.

Take some time to look around inside the church. The connection with the military in this village is very evident. Patrons of the church have included Henry IV, Henry VII and Charles II. An old village custom is said to have involved selling wives outside the church.

The graveyard surrounding the church has graves of some interest, including that of Richard Westbrook Baker from the Grange. There is a mausoleum containing most of the Stuart family, but not that of their most famous member.



Clatterpot House (13)

This was Janet Erskine Stuart, the daughter of the Rector, who was banned from the family when she became a Catholic.

Janet devoted her life to the work of the Society of the Sacred Heart, and became its Superior General, the head of the whole society, which has schools and convents in most parts of the world. She was born in the Rectory now called **Clatterpot House (13)** which can best be seen to the north of the church beyond the wall. It was built mainly in the 19th century, although some of it dates from a much earlier period.

Return to Main Street. Across the road is the **Chip Shop and Restaurant**. In previous times these premises, and the house next door, have housed various trades, including a delicatessen and a butcher. It was also once Collards the grocers.

To the right of it are **No. 35 Main Street**, the old Post Office, and **No. 33**, previously the village blacksmith shop. **No. 29 Main Street** is the modern Pinfold House, named after the village pinfold; this was an enclosed area for holding animals



No 8 Clatterpot Lane

found straying from their owner's land. Later the area between Main Street and The Leas was used by Blands Coaches, founded in 1929 under the name of Pride of Rutland.

Turn left along Main Street. The new **Rectory (14)** was built in the 1970s. Next is **No. 42 Main Street**. This was formerly a pair of cottages, built in the 19th century and designed by Henry Roberts, as architect to the "Society for Improving the Conditions of the Labouring Classes". Roberts was a pioneer in the field of working-class housing, and his designs were published by the Society for landowners and others to use.

The Anchorage, No. 46 Main Street was reputedly the site of a former public house called **Fox and Hounds**.

Retrace your steps along Main Street past the village shop. A little further along on the right, is **No. 20 Main Street (15)**, a Grade II listed thatched house occupied by a John Brown in 1730 at an annual rent of £2.00 for the house, 4 acres,

1 rood and 20 perches of arable land, and 3 roods of "inclosed" land. From 1861, it appears to have been the village butchers, occupied amongst others by members of the Hollis family.

The former slaughterhouse is now **No. 18 Main Street**, and next door used to be Pump Cottage, another location where the villagers came for their water; the pump was known as "Isaac's Pump". Next is **Fir Tree Farm, No. 16 Main Street**, a Grade II listed thatched former farm built circa 1709 and still having its original clasped purlin roof structure. Its outbuildings included a milk parlour and pig sties.

Nearby stands **Holme Farm (16)**, built possibly in the early 18th century and likewise Grade II listed. This is the only building in the village to have suffered bomb damage in the 2nd World War, when young Joe Hollis found a flash (practice) bomb, took it home and it exploded. Buildings and land belonging to the farm were developed during the 1990s and became **The Spinney**.

Continuing further along Main Street you come to the **Wenton Close** estate (named after a lost medieval hamlet) and the site of the old Central School. In 1906 artefacts from around 600BC were found in this area, and are now housed at the Rutland Museum.

Turning back towards the centre of Cottesmore, on the right-hand side of the road you pass **The Thatch, No. 5 Main Street**, 18th century, Grade II listed and **Ivy Cottage (17)** next door, both of which were formerly occupied by H D Smith the village school former Headmaster. It was at Ivy Cottage that a Mrs Challoner ran the "Scottish Tea Gardens".

Further down are the oldest terraced houses in the village **Nos. 15 and 17 Main Street**, both Grade II listed and boasting pantile roof and Collyweston slate respectively. **No. 15** housed the man in charge of the ironstone horses; the horses used in the quarrying in the surrounding area. At the rear of **No. 17** there is an overdoor stone tablet carved with "John Abbey 1775".

You are now back at the Sun Inn, where your walk commenced. We hope you enjoyed your time in our Village.

Please visit us again.



If there is anything more that you would like to know about the village, the Cottesmore History and Archaeology Group website (www.thelivingvillage.co.uk) gives you the opportunity to put questions to us. We have published a number of books about the village, including “How Old is Cottesmore?” which details researches that have been undertaken into the history of our oldest buildings.

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