

# RIVER STOUR AT NAYLAND IMAGES FROM 1975

The images within this document clearly reveal the extent in which the condition and navigation of the River Stour at Nayland has deteriorated in the last 47 years. The once thriving river is now little more than a stream unless it is in flood and when in flood lack of maintenance has had a noticeable impact. The standard of navigation is nothing like that of 1975 which was stated as being the benchmark in the 1977 Anglian Water Authority Act.



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Historic photos from: John Spooner, Linda Allen, Wendy Sparrow, Internet & Google Earth

Other photos from: Sally Dalton, Antony Day, Adrian Amos, Nayland Calendar



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## The Navigation

The 1705 Act of Parliament making the River 'Stower' navigable from Manningtree in Essex to Sudbury in Suffolk was important for the prosperity of Nayland. The navigation was one of the earliest statutory navigations in the country and was a major means of transportation for more than 200 years. The Commissioners for the Navigation met annually from 1781 until 1914 at the Queen's Head in Nayland.

## After the Navigation

The navigation had declined with the coming of the railways in the nineteenth century and the barge traffic which had been a common sight passing through Nayland had ceased by the end of the first world war period. With increased flooding a Drainage Board was set up in 1918 by the Ministry of Agriculture. River authorities were also set up and still continue today.

## Leisure activities

The river has always been a source of pleasure as well as being a working river. Generations of children learnt to swim in the river and people have always boated up and down stream.

In days gone by the river often froze over and people used to skate on it. It was also an ideal place for organised water sports; until the second world war, annual sports days and special celebrations always included aquatic sports such as walking the bowsprit, the tub and shovel race, swimming races and diving off Anchor Bridge. Fishing has carried on for centuries.

## How the river has changed in modern times

Before the days of the navigation the river was said to be a fast running river but then the course was altered by man to suit his purposes. During the 1960s, at the time the Nayland bypass was built, major alterations were made to the river. The stream running under old Pop's Bridge on the outskirts of the village was dug out to become the flood relief channel and the main river now flows through a small channel under the A134.

More recently in 2002 the Environment Agency conducted a Feasibility Study of the River Stour. Five options were discussed from increasing the possibility of more navigation through to minimal development. The Nayland Conservation Society supported Option 1 which favoured minimal change. Option 2 was finally approved which supported the improvement of landing stages for rowing boats and canoes and conservation work.



Nayland 1951 aerial view

*The Environment Agency (EA) state following consultation with their Waterways Team: with regard their duties under the 1977 Anglian Water Authority Act section 8 they have clarification on maintenance activities for the purposes of navigation on the River Stour.*

*For the "Maintenance of navigations it states that "The Authority" shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to maintain the main navigation channels and navigation works of the waterways specified in Schedule I to this Act to at least as good a standard for the purpose of navigation by pleasure boats as that to which they were maintained in the period of nine months immediately preceding 8th December, 1975."*

*The EA add there is no known record or document pertaining to what the standard of the channels were for the purposes of navigation between the 8 March 1975 and the 8 December 1975, so it is very difficult to compare what the navigation is now to what it was like then.*

*They add they must also further highlight the 'reasonably practicable' element to this duty which is often overlooked. As is demonstrated in case law and with legal advice this 'reasonably practicable' element can also take into consideration levels of funding and resources.*



# RIVER STOUR AT NAYLAND 1975





# RIVER STOUR AT NAYLAND 1980-84





# RIVER STOUR AT NAYLAND 1990-98





# RIVER STOUR AT NAYLAND 1998-2004





# RIVER STOUR AT NAYLAND 2005-2010



2007





# RIVER STOUR AT NAYLAND 2010-2016





# RIVER STOUR AT NAYLAND 2017-2021





# RIVER STOUR AT NAYLAND 2022

