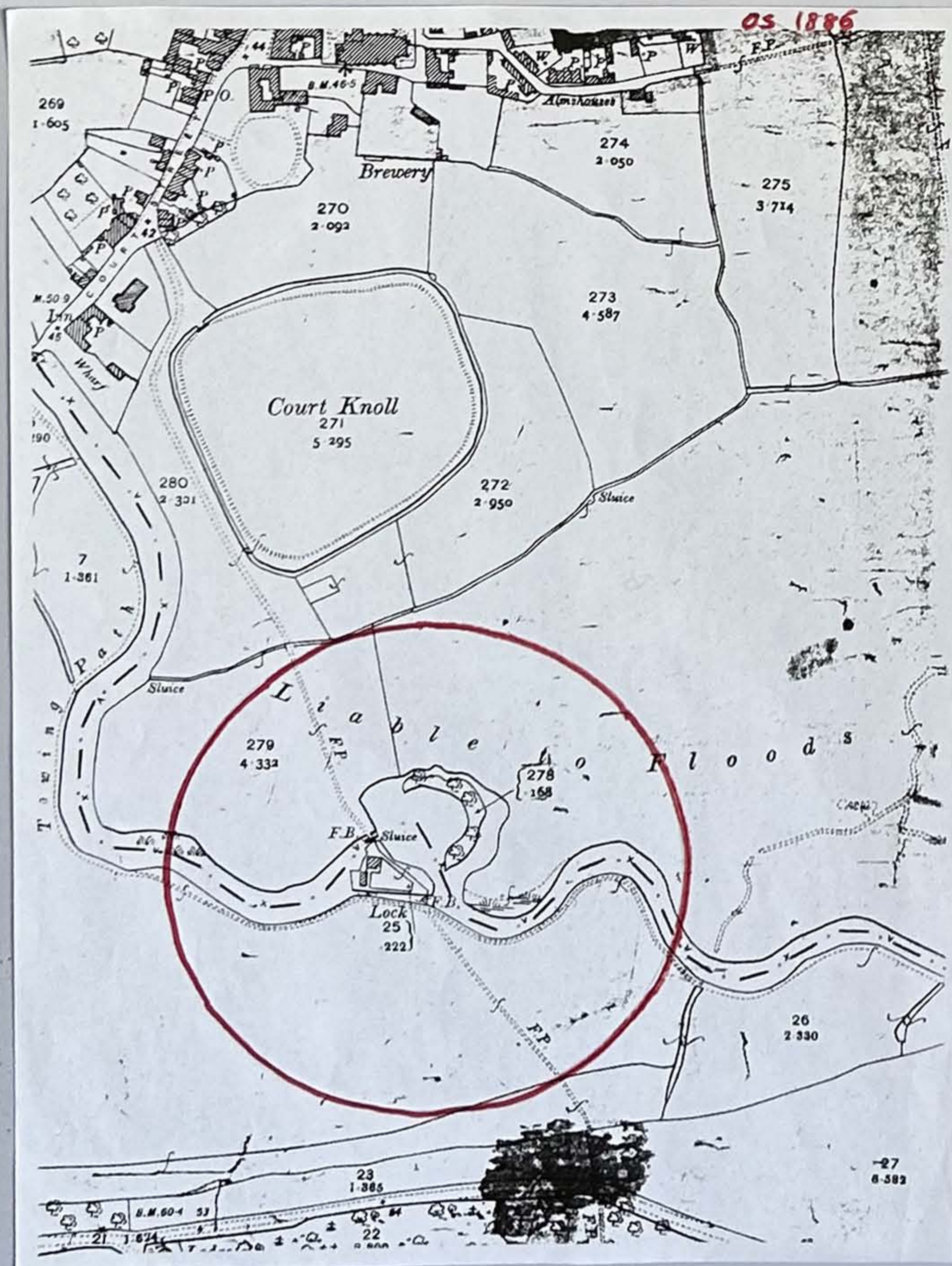


# HORKESLEY LOCK



## A BRIEF HISTORY OF HORKESLEY LOCK

1705 Stour Navigation Act passed making the river from Sudbury to Manningtree navigable. A lock was built at Nayland and another farther downstream which although called Horkesley Lock was closer to Nayland than Great Horkesley.

1900s The Navigation declined. By the First World War period barges no longer passed through the village. Horkesley Lock and the lock keeper's cottage fell into ruins and disappeared. The bridge over the lock connecting Nayland with Great Horkesley also disappeared.

1947 Nayland Lock was replaced by a weir and its cottage survived.

1960s Nayland Parish Council tried to reinstate the bridge at Horkesley Lock but Essex County Council said the cost of a new bridge could not be justified. The whole area became overgrown.

1974 Nayland & Wissington Conservation Society formed. One of its first aims was to see the Horkesley Lock site restored. The Anglian Water Authority had no objection provided the normal flow of the river was not diverted. Despite the enthusiasm of a small group of people the scheme floundered mainly because of the lack of voluntary labour available and the costs involved.

1992 Celia Richardson, Dedham Vale & Stour Valley Project Officer, was approached about reviving the scheme. She consulted with the National Rivers Authority who agreed to carry out a scheme of restoration of the lock pool and to erect two new bridges to reconnect Footpath No 47 over the river.

1995 The work took place over several months and in December the final stage was a day of tree planting around the lock pool.

Since 1995 there has been an ongoing programme of management and additional tree planting. In early 2015 the footpath was closed because the steps on the main bridge were dangerous. Repairs and improvements were carried out in October 2015 and the public were able to cross the river once again.



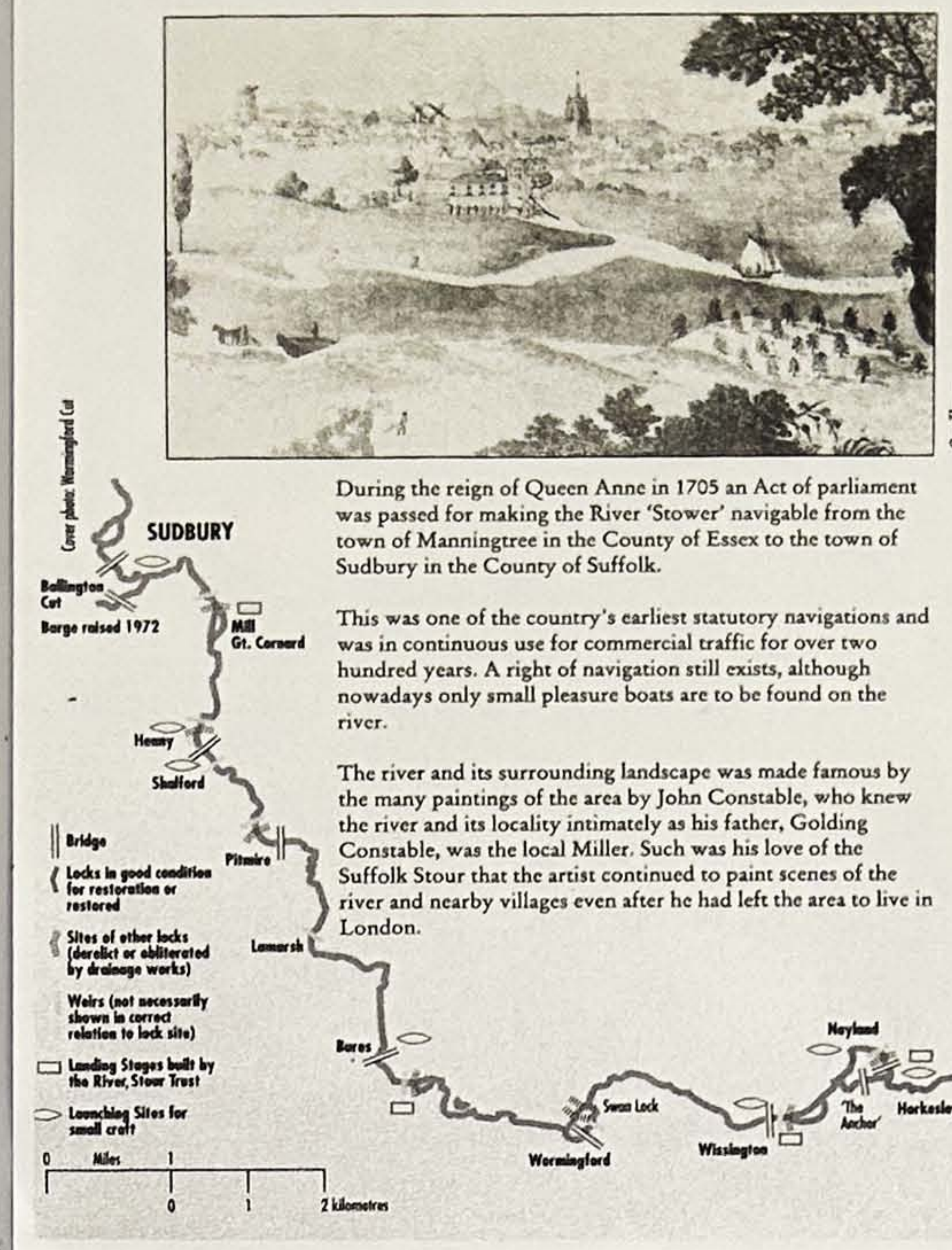
Horkesley Lock was built as a result of the Stour Navigation Act of 1705 when the River Stour was made navigable from Manningtree to Sudbury. Commercial barge traffic through Nayland was a common sight until the early part of this century when, mainly because of the railways, the navigation declined. By the First World War period the barge traffic had ceased and gradually all the locks along the river disappeared. While Nayland Lock, farther upstream, was replaced by a weir in 1947 and the lock keeper's cottage survived, Horkesley Lock did not fare so well. The lock and cottage gradually fell into ruins and the bridges became unusable and disappeared.

The area had been a popular place for water sports, boating, fishing and picnics and walkers used the footpath to Boxted through Court Knoll meadow, across a bridge onto the "island" where the lock cottage stood and over a second bridge on the lock across the river.

# HORKESLEY LOCK (2)

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RIVER STOUR NAVIGATION

1705 TO THE PRESENT DAY



The 1705 Act named the Mayor and Aldermen of Sudbury of that time and ten other gentlemen as the 'Undertakers', and gave them the necessary powers for making the river navigable. It also appointed some hundred Commissioners to act as referees in cases of dispute between riparian owners and the 'Undertakers'. The Commissioners consisted of 3 Peers, 18 Baronets, 9 Knights and 80 other esquires, but any of nine of these could make a quorum and had full powers. In the year 1706 the 'Undertakers', with a capital of £4,800, authorised Messrs Cornelius Denn and Dean Cock of London to execute the powers granted under the Act, and in 1708 work commenced on making the river navigable.

The following toll table of 1741 gives some idea of the cost of transporting foodstuffs, although many other goods were also carried such as oil, pitch, soap, vinegar, paper, tallow, iron, lead, sugar, butter, coal and bricks. One of the regular items of cargo were grindstones for the numerous mills to be found on the river, and the cost of transporting these from Mistley Quay to Sudbury was:

| Grindstones                           | Wheat               | Flour               | Peas                | Beans               | Barley              | Oats                | Malt                | Wheat               | Flour               | Peas                | Beans               | Barley              | Oats                | Malt                | Wheat               | Flour               | Peas                | Beans               | Barley              | Oats                | Malt                |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 5ft Grindstones at 1/6d (2 1/2p) each | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) | 20 at 2.0 3/4 (13p) |
| 3ft Grindstones at 10 1/2d (5p) each  |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |
| 4ft Grindstones at 6d (2 1/2p) each   |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |

The Act of 1705 was amended in 1780 in a fresh Act, partly because all the original Commissioners were dead, and of those appointed Commissioners under the powers of the Act only two remained alive. This second Act



## THE STOUR NAVIGATION



Wiston Ferriarise Publ  
May 4/94

These barges are waiting to get into Wiston Lock en route for Sudbury. Barges, or lighters as they were also called, worked in pairs. The back lighter acted as a rudder with a tiller which could be unshipped if required. The barges were about 47 feet long and could carry about twelve tons of cargo. Two horses pulled the lighters upstream, one down. They had to change banks 17 times between Sudbury and the sea and the horse was trained to be boated across on strengthened hatchcovers. The journey upstream took about two days at an average speed of 3 mph, downstream was quicker, about 4 mph.



What the Horkesley Lock site looked like in 1951  
drawn by R Greenwood



# HORKESLEY LOCK (3)

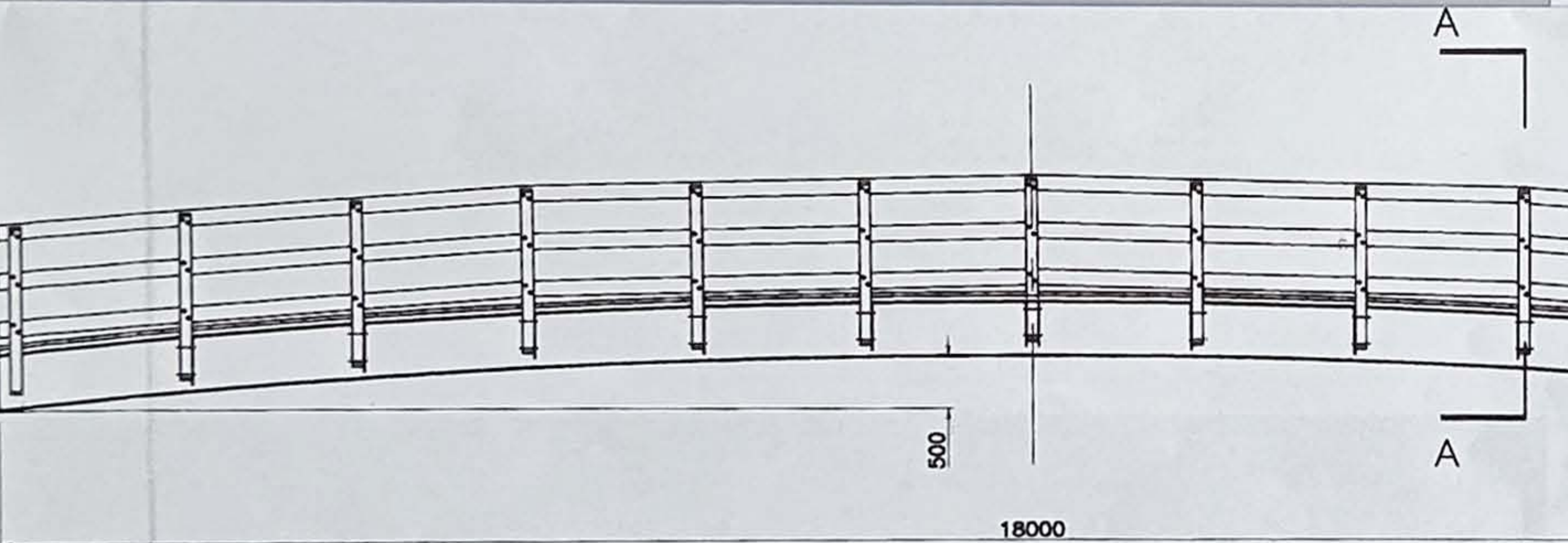
During the 1960s the Parish Council tried to reinstate the bridges at Horkesley Lock site without success. The "island" on which the lock cottage had stood was at that time in Essex but the county boundary was changed in 1989 and it came into Suffolk. Gradually the whole area of Horkesley Lock and its pool, once a busy, attractive place, was disappearing. It was becoming overgrown with willow and the pool was silting up so that it was no more than a small pond.

This was the state of the area when the Conservation Society was formed in 1974. One of the Society's earliest aims was to see the Horkesley Lock area restored. A great deal of time and effort was put into trying to achieve this but we were not successful, mainly because of the lack of voluntary help available and the cost involved. At that time there was no question of any financial help from the water authority.

1995

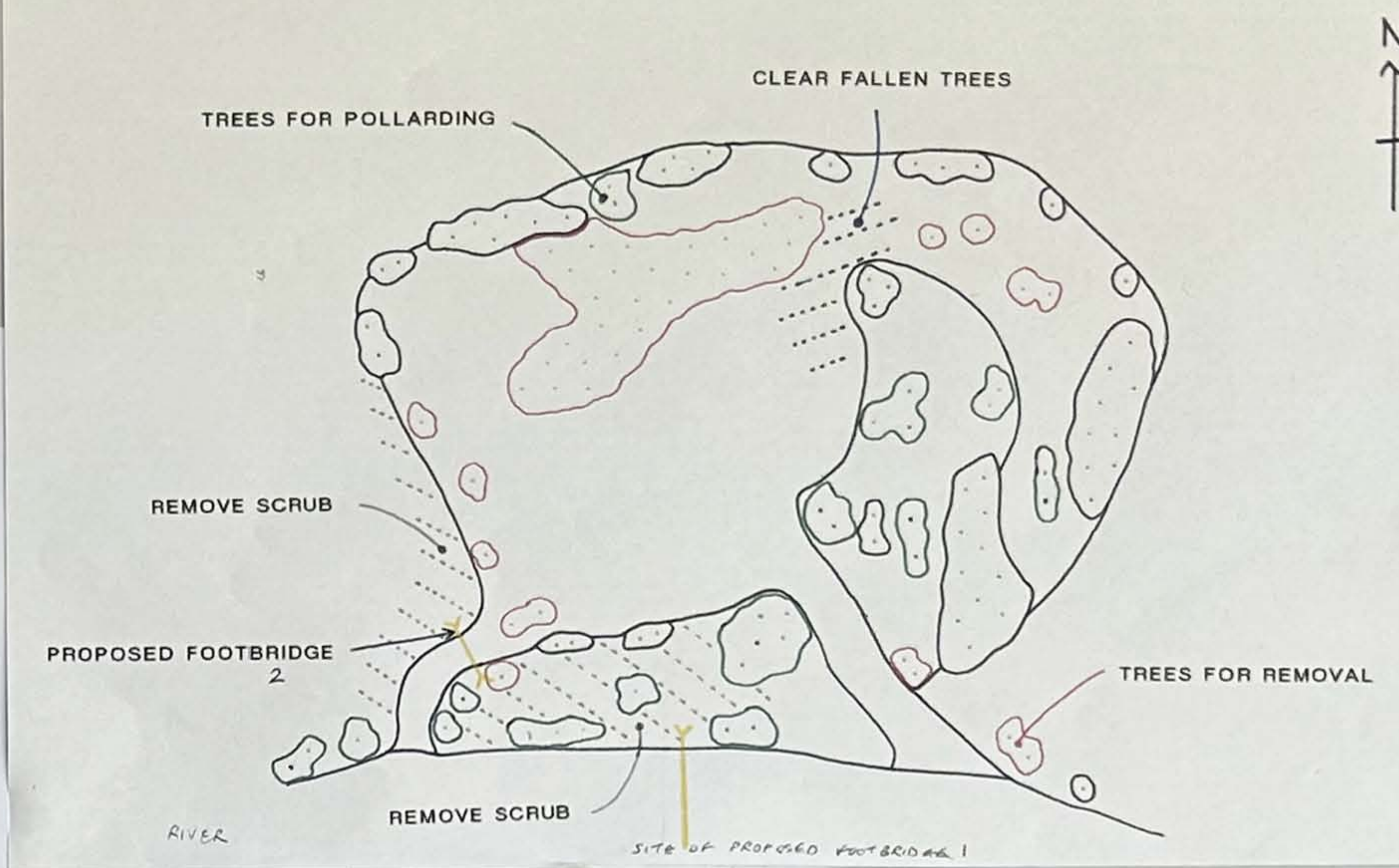
Since 1974 there have been considerable developments in conservation. The Dedham Vale & Stour Valley Countryside Project was created in 1981 to promote the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and in 1994 with their help the water authority [at that time the NRA] agreed to finance a £70,000 scheme to restore the site from a national conservation fund. The work was planned in three stages:

1. To thin the willows on site and pollard the mature trees to stop them collapsing. The overall tree canopy viewed from the village was to be retained.
2. To dredge the central area to reconnect it to the river. This was to create an area of open water which should provide an excellent habitat for fish.
3. The erection of two bridges, one over the inlet channel to the pool and the other over the main river to the Great Horkesley side. This would reconnect the designated footpath over the river which could no longer be used when the bridge over the old lock disappeared.



BRIDGE NO.1 ELEVATION 1:50

## 3. TREE AND SCRUB MANAGEMENT TO BE CARRIED OUT AT THE OLD LOCK POND

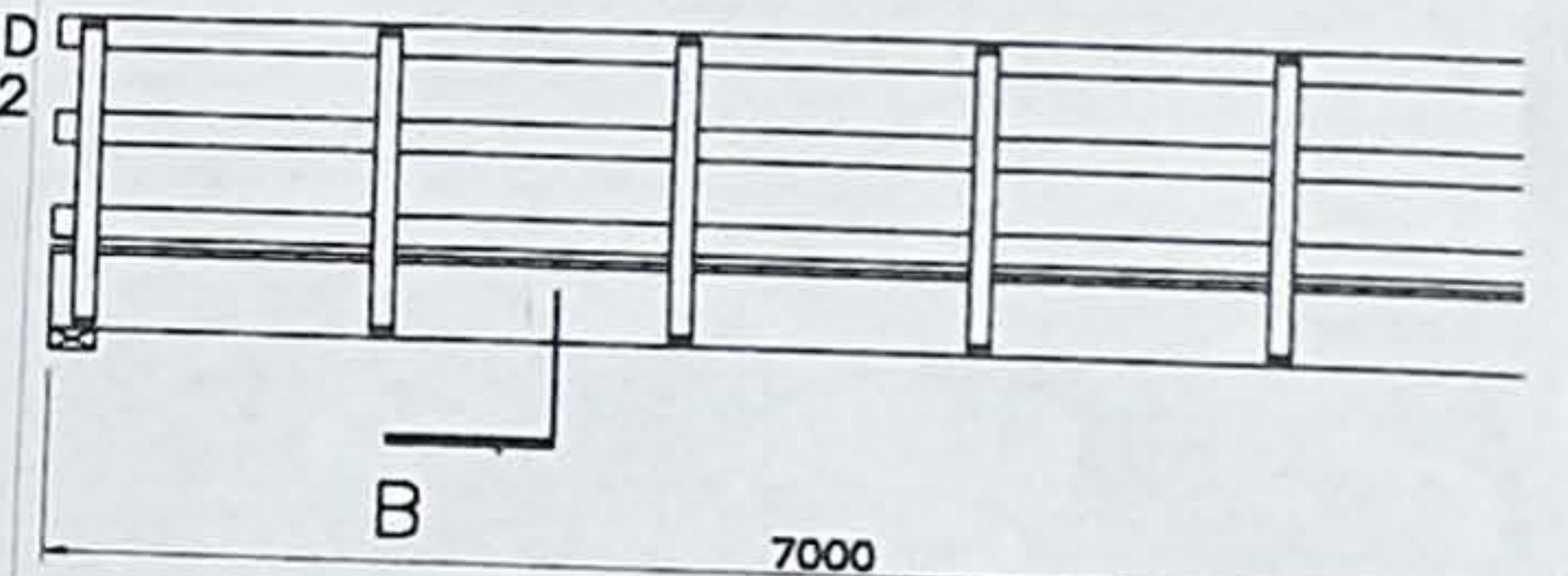


NEW POTTERS GRANGE ROAD GOOLE N. HUMBERSID  
DN14 6XF TEL: 0405 766060 FAX: 0405 768622

IENT National Rivers Authority  
PROJECT Nayland Footbridges  
LE General Arrangements

| IONS | SCALE     | DWG.NO.  | BRIDGE     | NO.2 | ELEVATION | 1:50 |
|------|-----------|----------|------------|------|-----------|------|
|      | 1:50 1:20 | 95/236   |            |      |           |      |
|      | DATE      | DRAWN BY | CHECKED BY |      |           |      |
|      | Feb 95    | GPG      | MS         |      |           |      |

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BRIDGE NO.2 ELEVATION 1:50



How teamwork has helped bring a once busy waterway back to its former glory

## Enterprising tales of the river bank

An important riverside location has been regenerated through co-operation between a local conservation group and the National Rivers Authority. **ALAN COCKSEGE reports**

THE renovation of Horkesley Lock pond at Nayland is the culmination of 30 years of pressure, initially by the parish council and more latterly by the village conservation society.

Following navigation acts passed in the 18th Century, 13 crude locks and a further 13 flash locks were installed on the River Stour to enable lighters to be towed 24 miles from Braintree tidal lock to Sudbury. All mills on the stream had cuts and warps to enable loading.

According to the River Stour Trust's history, 100,000 tons of goods a year were being transported on the river by the early 19th Century and the navigation company, which operated the waterway, made healthy profits until the coming of railways.

Nayland Conservation Society founder Wendy Sparrow has built up a collection of old photographs of life at Horkesley Lock around the turn of the present century. She says the restoration of the pond could not have come at a better time. It marks the 21st anniversary of the society and, she points out, "Although the lock itself and lock-keeper's cottage were originally in Horkesley, the area has always been considered part of Nayland. In Victorian times it was a popular place for boating parties, water sports and picnics. Many people would have used the footpath through Court Knoll meadow and across the bridge onto the island and over the lock, and so on up to

Boasted: "As the lock and associated lock-keeper's cottage and stabling gradually fell into ruin, the bridges over the river also became unusable and disappeared. "Very gradually, the whole area of the lock and its pool, once such a busy, attractive place, vanished. "Recently I have discovered the last lock-keeper was a German called Meisner. "One day in 1915 Ben Chace, who died last year, saw part of the lock-keeper's cottage slide

Ambitious scheme has now been completed

WORK undertaken to renovate an area which was a bustling, riverside scene a century ago is one of the most ambitious projects of its type undertaken by the National Rivers Authority.

Regional offices of the authority were two years ago given the chance to bid for a slice of the cake of a one-off conservation hand bonus.

The Eastern region submitted a scheme on the Suffolk-Essex border for restoration work at Horkesley Lock, Nayland, and now the £70,000 initiative has been completed.

Although it is unlikely a lock will ever be re-erected on the River Stour site, the former lock pond has been dredged out, and two new bridges help in the restoration of footpath links between the two counties.

They are, from left, chairman Barry Wakefield and his wife Elizabeth, Mary George and Wendy Sparrow.

More than 2,000 cubic yards of silt has been removed to recreate the pond, which was once an overnight stop for horse-drawn barges, and also provided a centre for local recreation.

Marie Leeds, local NRA conservation officer, says: "We hope this can be seen as a showpiece for what can be done elsewhere in the future."

The money used at Nayland came from a fund created after one-off savings achieved by the NRA nationally, but we would hope when people see what we have achieved, then other conservation money might be forthcoming.

"Normally we operate with a fairly small conservation budget, but we would hope to take on other major initiatives, perhaps with assistance from the National Lottery or Department of Environment funding."

Mr Leeds said the Hayland project had been chosen because the Nayland Conservation Society had been pushing for the scheme since the days when Anglian Water was responsible for rivers.

"We have received a lot of encouragement and support from the officers of the Dedham Vale and Stour Valley Project team, as well as the Ramblers Association, county councillors and Nayland villagers."

Of the £70,000 expenditure, erection of a large footbridge over the main river and a second across the pond inlet had come to £50,000. The river bridge had to be built to exacting standards, and is high enough to eventually allow craft to pass beneath.

Tim Barrett, assistant catchment engineer for the Stour Valley, said the original pond was 30 feet deep. The pond allowed for water to bypass the former lock, in the same way that mill ponds were created. Water falling into the pond caused scouring, leading to a considerable depth of water.

In this instance it had been decided to dredge down only six to eight feet, and the pond was now about 50 yards across, compared with 100 yards a century ago.

If the river became navigable again at Hayland, it would be unnecessary to restore Horkesley lock because new structures elsewhere in the river meant different water levels would operate.

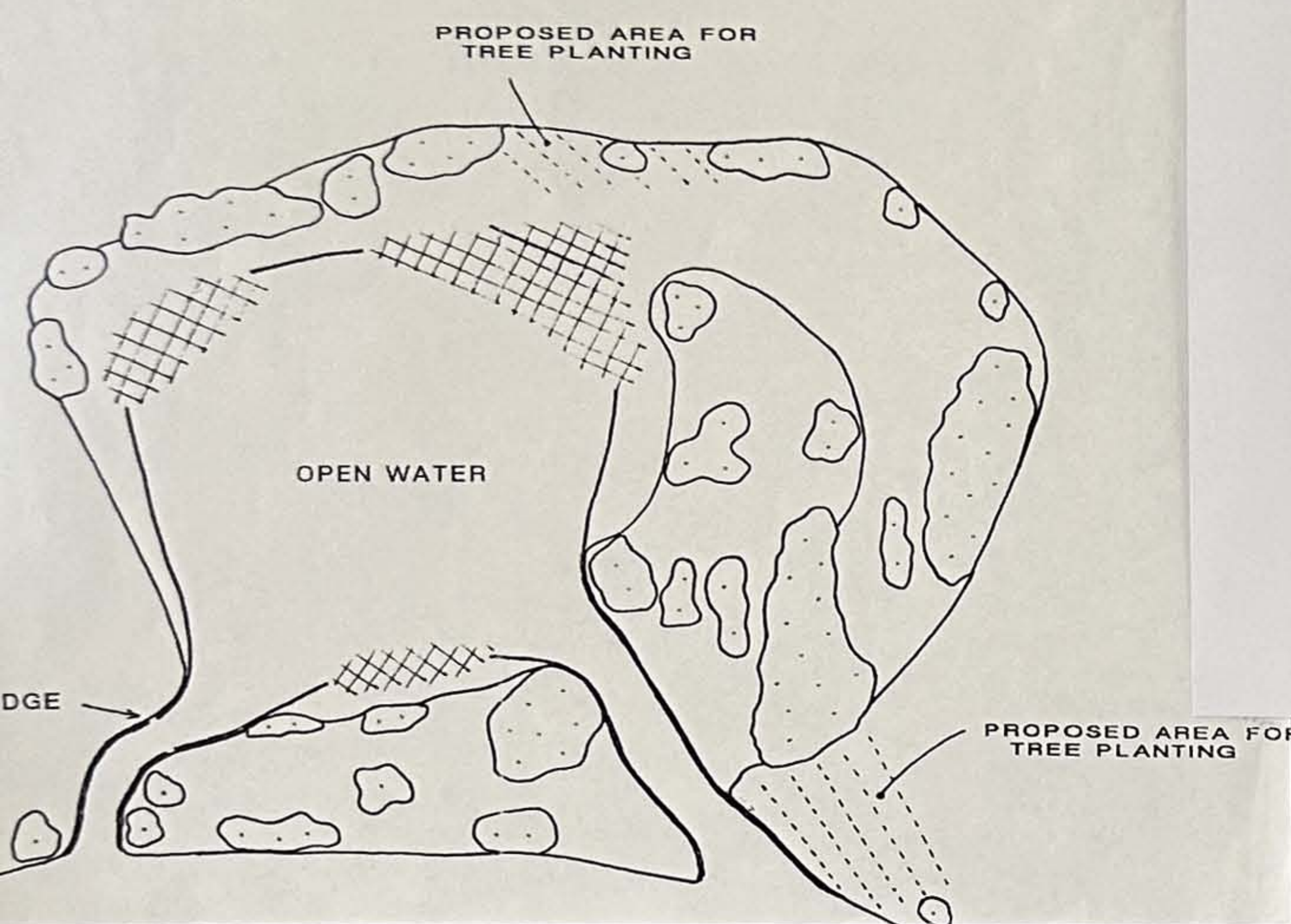
Mr Barrett anticipated the new pond becoming an important fishery because the shallow, fast-flowing waters of the adjoining Stour provided an excellent breeding ground.

EAST ANGLIAN DAILY TIMES 21.96

# VOLUNTEERS WANTED !

HORKESLEY LOCK

TREE PLANTING



## TREE PLANTING AT HORKESLEY LOCK

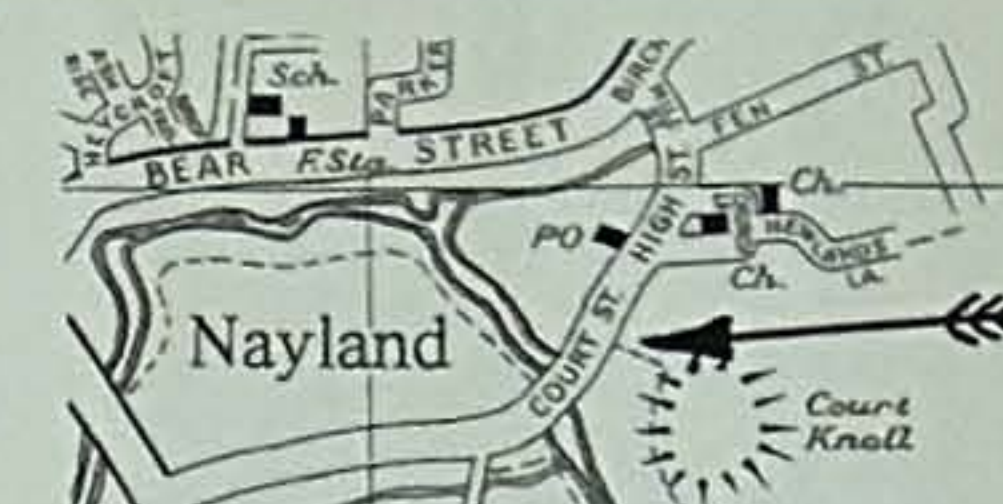
The final stage of the project was the Tree Planting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1995. Many villagers took part, including:

John Slater, Shaddelows Farm  
Gerry Battye, Chairman, Parish Council  
Mrs Rosemary Knox, Vice-Chair, Parish Council  
John Gladwin, Parish Councillor  
Barry Nevin, Headteacher, Nayland School  
Mrs Terry Bannister, Nayland School  
Nayland Scouts  
John Millbank, Chairman, Nayland Youth Club  
7 members of Youth Club  
Harold Miller, Footpaths Warden  
Col J Neighbour, Ex Footpaths Warden  
Denis Halliday, Parish Recorder  
Brian Newton, SCC Rights of Way Officer  
Mary George, Conservation Society Committee  
Andora Carver, Conservation Society Secretary  
James Carver  
Roy & Sandra Norfolk  
Robert Dryden  
Inkpen family  
Jules Pretty & family  
Sparrow family



## HORKESLEY LOCK NEEDS YOUR HELP

Saturday 27th June  
10am - 12.30pm at:

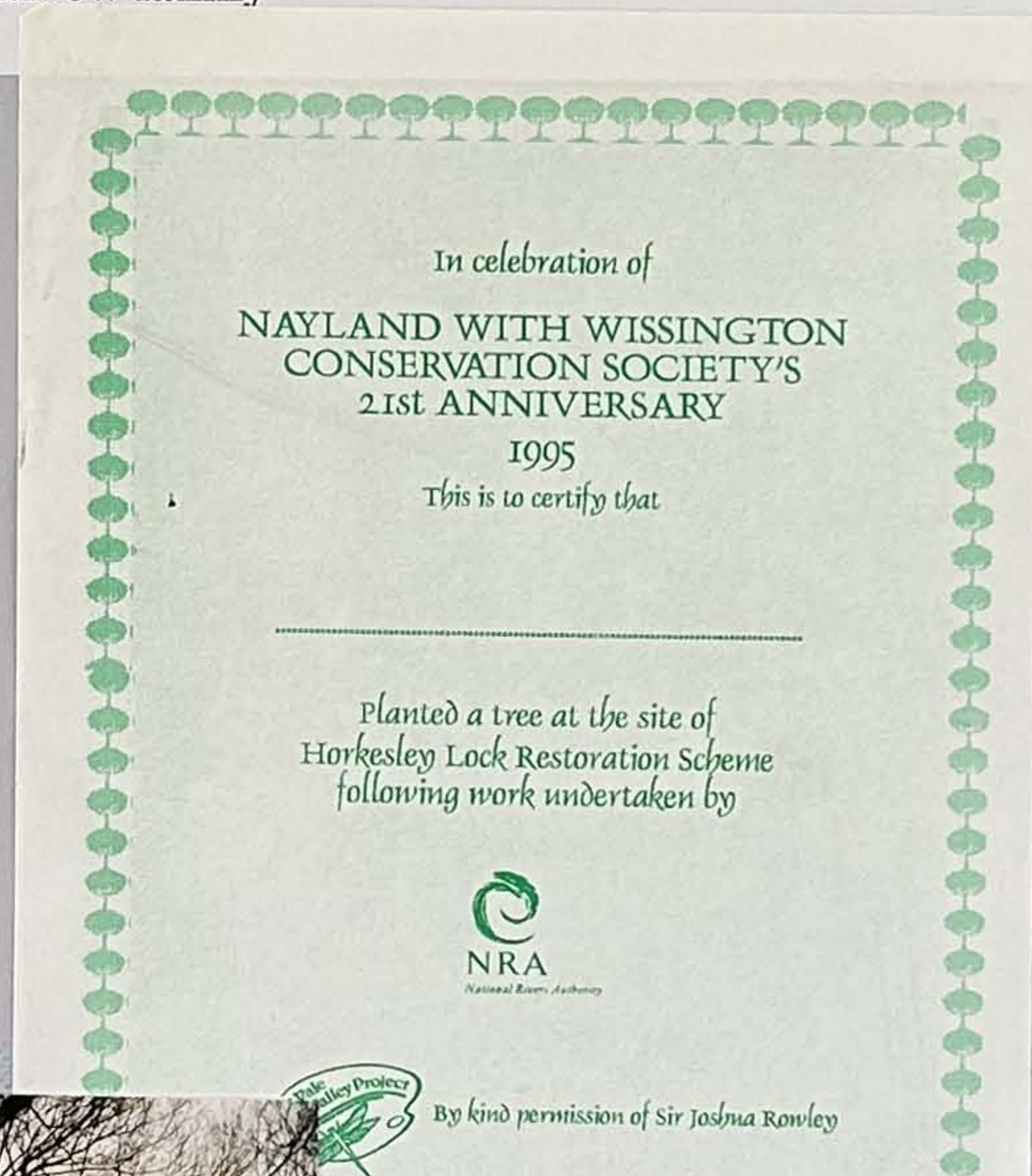


This morning's work has been arranged in association with the Parish Council and Conservation Society so you can play your part in improving the beautiful countryside surrounding the village.

The work will involve maintenance of the recently planted trees around Horkesley Lock. All tools, gloves etc. will be provided as well as drinks and biscuits.

There will be an opportunity to discuss new ideas and plan further work and events.

For further information call Matt Hullis 01473 583176



By kind permission of Sir Joshua Rowley

## Volunteers help bring a riverside back to life

VILLAGERS, scouts, children and visitors from further afield helped plant more than 200 trees and shrubs at a transformed Horkesley Lock, Nayland, on Sunday.

Restoring the site of the disused lock - overgrown since horse-drawn barges stopped using it earlier this century - was a long-held dream of Nayland-with-Wissington Conservation Society.

But no money was available until the National Rivers Authority decided to fund the £70,000 restoration scheme this year.

The original pond, once a favourite swimming spot for locals, has been dug out and the work has included replacing two footbridges, one crossing the River Stour into Essex to join up with another footpath.

The tree planting scheme was drawn up by the Dedham Vale and Stour Valley Project, helped by Nayland Primary School children who visited the lock to give their views on where the trees should go.

Species planted include various willows native to Britain, alder, hazel and three rare black poplars.

Dedham Vale Project officer Celia Richardson said the area would take a while to recover but the aim was to make it as natural-looking as possible so people could enjoy the riverside and pond.

Everyone planting a tree on Sunday received a certificate celebrating the conservation society's 21st anniversary.

Landowner Sir Joshua Rowley, a former Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk, was due to join the volunteers but was indisposed.



Scouts Sean Norfolk (left) and Jonathan Skilley (right) plant a white willow at the restored lock site.

Merle Leeds, NRA Conservation Officer who was responsible for managing the whole Horkesley Lock project

