

Follow riverside paths from Nayland to explore quiet corners of the **Dedham Vale**. Visit an ancient church where a dragon lies in wait and look for otters slipping into the dark waters of the river **Stour**.



Highlights



1 Nayland has over 100 listed buildings, nearly all of which are timber framed and some over 500 years old. They were built when Nayland was a wealthy wool town, with a thriving weaving industry. A tax survey in 1522 indicated that Nayland was the 42nd most prosperous town in England. However, the decline in the weaving industry by 1700 meant that the fortunes of the town changed and it had to rely on other industries such as tanning, soap manufacture and milling. Very little re-building took place, so today you can wander the streets and admire the ancient buildings.



2 St. James's Church sits at the heart of the village, dating from around 1400. The most famous feature of the church is the altarpiece painting by the artist John Constable - Christ Blessing the Bread and Wine. It was probably commissioned by Constable's aunt and village resident, Martha Smith. According to letters from the time, Constable was reluctant to start the painting and had to be encouraged by his mother. Just beyond the church, beside the path, is Alston Court, one of the finest medieval town houses in Britain.



3 The Court Knoll is, at first glance, a flat field, but look carefully and you can see that it is surrounded by a deep human-made ditch. Documentary evidence relates back to the Norman Conquest. The site may have originated as a Late Anglo-Saxon thegn's residence, including a church and hall complex within a defended enclosure. The large quantity of Roman ceramic building material suggests a high status, probably ecclesiastical building was constructed using rubble robbed from a Roman site.

4 The River Stour is a peaceful waterway today, but 200 years ago, it was the main trade route into Suffolk and north Essex. Cargo was unloaded from sea going vessels at the estuary port of Mistley and transported 25 miles by barge to the inland port of Sudbury. Local goods, including grain and wool, were exported in the same way. The Anchor Inn is so named because it is roughly half way along this route. The barges would be moored here and the boatmen would take a well-earned rest.

5 Nayland Meadow sits alongside the river Stour and is owned by Nayland Meadow Ltd. The meadow is managed for wildlife and for people to enjoy. There are hedges, small fields, woodland, meadows and a pond. The accessible path follows the river meander, starting and finishing at the Anchor car park.

The Dedham Vale National Landscape & Stour Valley

Picturesque villages, rolling farmland, rivers, meadows, ancient woodlands and a wide variety of local wildlife combine to create what many describe as the traditional English lowland landscape on the Suffolk-Essex border.

The National Landscape conserves and enhances the natural beauty of the area through landscape restoration, creating habitats for wildlife, volunteering activities such as hedge planting, and providing funding for community projects.



Scan the QR code to find out more about the Dedham Vale National Landscape & Stour Valley or you can visit dedhamvale-NL.org.uk. Get in touch on **01394 445225**.

Key to map

- National Landscape
- Stour Valley Project Area
- ⋯ Stour Valley Path
- 🌳 Country Parks and Picnic sites
- 🚣 Public canoe launching locations. Craft must have an appropriate licence www.riverstourtrust.org

Visiting Nayland

Ordnance Survey Explorer Map No. 196: Sudbury, Hadleigh and the Dedham Vale

Car: Nayland is located beside the A134 between Colchester and Sudbury

Parking: Nayland Village Hall car park, CO6 4JH (located off Church Lane in Nayland)

Bus: traveline.info or suffolkonboard.com

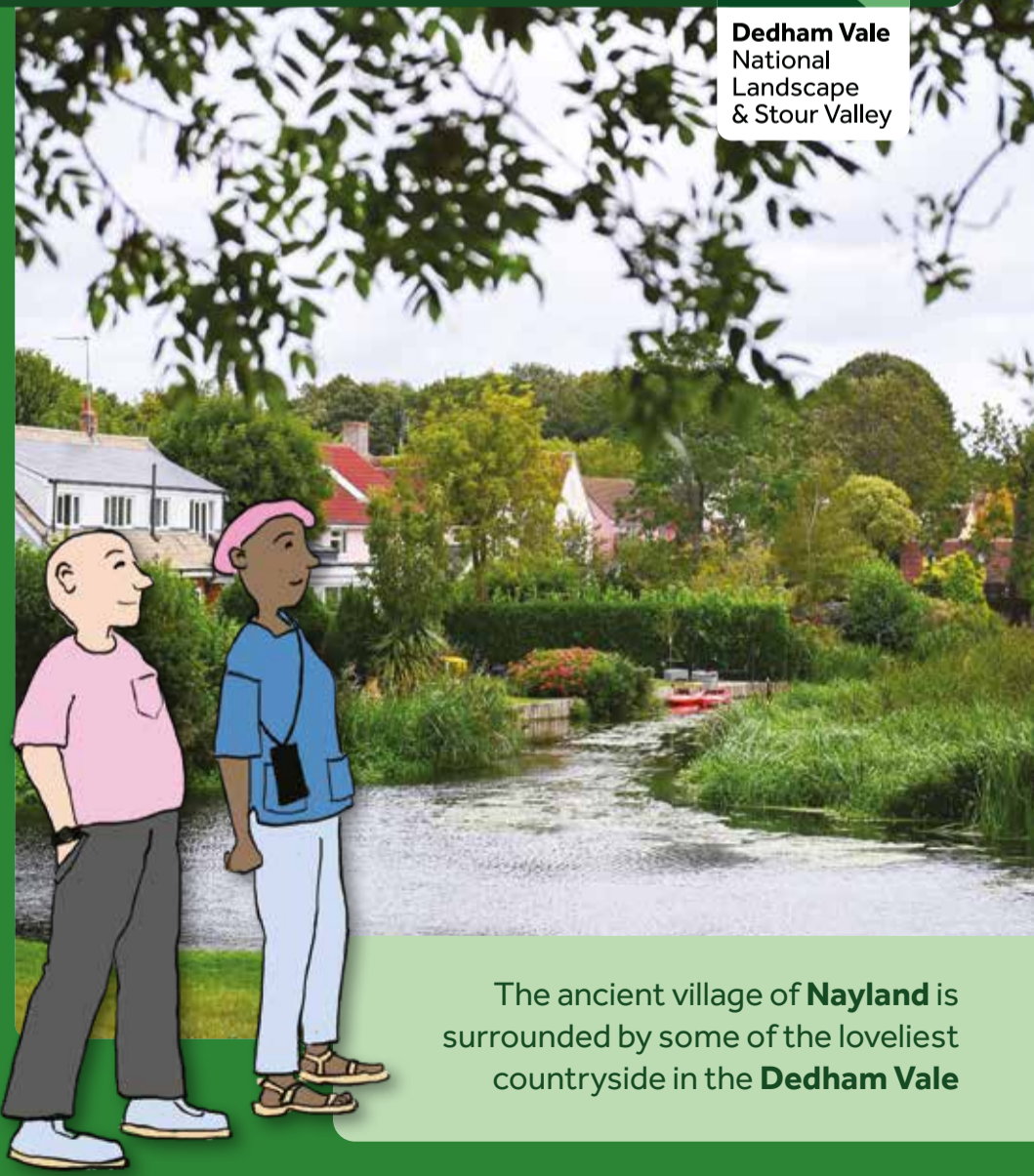
Train: The nearest train station is Colchester Station, approx 6 miles away. Train timetable at nationalrail.co.uk

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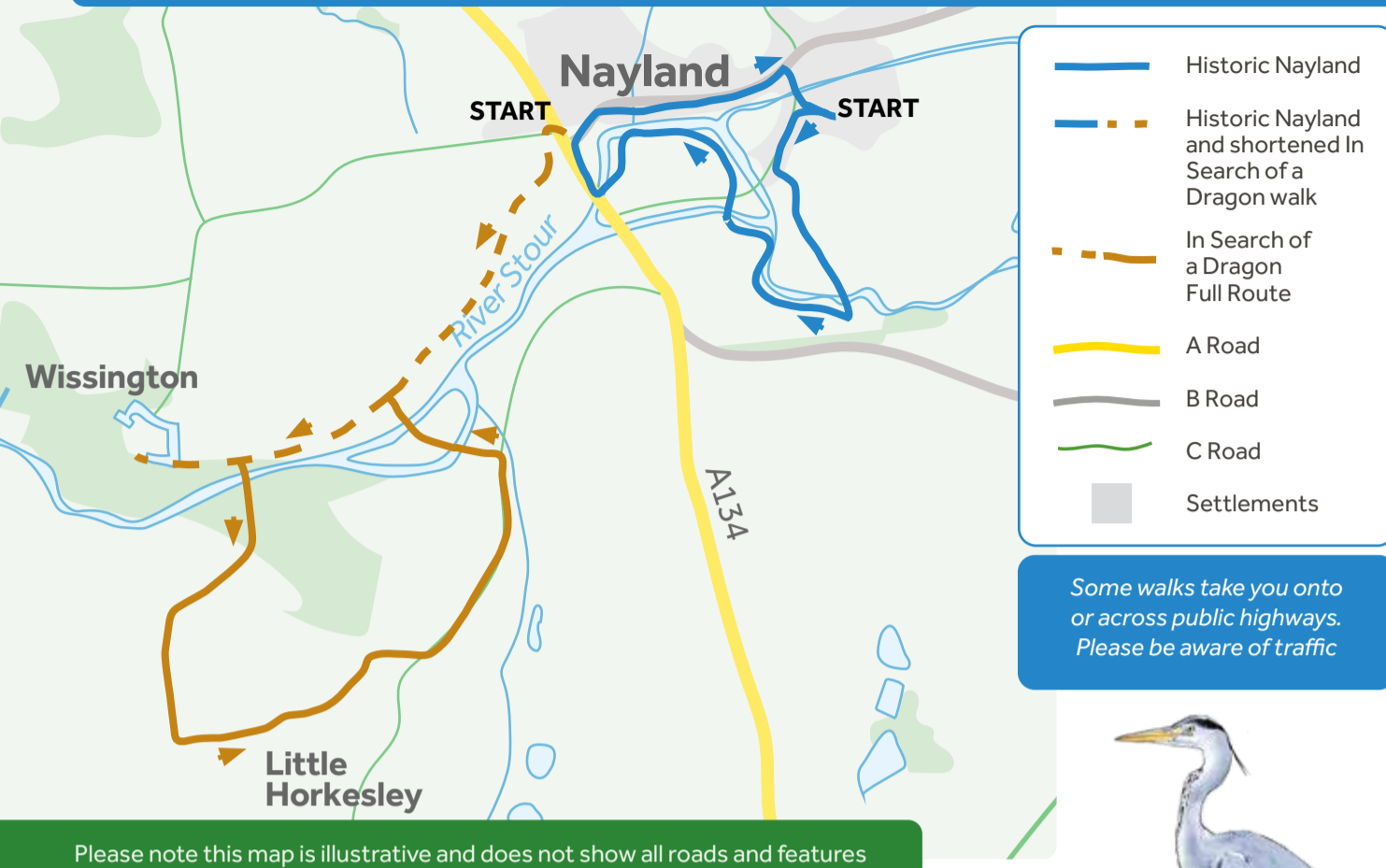
Nayland Explorer Guide

Dedham Vale National Landscape & Stour Valley










The ancient village of **Nayland** is surrounded by some of the loveliest countryside in the **Dedham Vale**

Nayland Explorer Guide



Please note this map is illustrative and does not show all roads and features

-  Historic Nayland
-  Historic Nayland and shortened In Search of a Dragon walk
-  In Search of a Dragon Full Route
-  A Road
-  B Road
-  C Road
-  Settlements

Some walks take you onto or across public highways. Please be aware of traffic

Countryside Code

The Dedham Vale National Landscape & Stour Valley has a network of footpaths and bridleways. To protect you, other people, wildlife, and the landscape, please make sure you:

- Stick to marked footpaths
- Leave things as you find them
- Do not light fires or BBQs
- Take all litter home with you
- Please keep dogs under close control at all times and on lead as advised



Scan the QR code to find more advice and visitor guides, or visit

dedhamvale-nl.org.uk/visiting

Historic Nayland

 **Terrain:**

Paths and tracks, some minor roads and village roads. Route can be very muddy in places and flooding is possible after heavy rain. Take care near areas of deep water.

 **Distance:**
2 miles (3.3 km)

 **Time:**
1 hour

Start: Nayland Village Hall car park, CO6 4JH. Soak up the history of Nayland on this short walk visiting St. James's Church and the ancient Court Knoll. Follow this with a delightful stroll along the banks of the Stour, passing the impressive Nayland weir.

Leave village hall car park via access road and turn left into lane. Take next right and walk beside St. James's Church. Turn left into main street. Continue and then take path junction off left through gate. Walk beside Court Knoll earthwork and keep straight at gate. Bear right when path divides and then almost immediately left beside pond. Enter thicket. Cross small bridge and then larger bridge over river Stour. On far side, turn sharp right on permissive path. Follow winding path beside river until large arched bridge.

Turn right across bridge and continue ahead over green. Cross road and turn right along pavement. Just before bridge, take path off left down steps. Follow winding path beside river until main road. Climb bank and turn sharp right across river, keeping behind crash barrier. Bear right, away from main road, and continue beside river.


When you reach road beside bus stop, turn right along pavement (cross road and turn left here to follow 'In Search of a Dragon!' route). Follow pavement into Nayland. After some distance, turn right into High Street. Continue for a short way and then turn left into Church Lane. Continue ahead and then retrace route back to start.




In Search of a Dragon!

 **Terrain:**

Paths and tracks, some minor roads and village roads. Route can be very muddy in places and flooding is possible after heavy rain. Take care near areas of deep water.

 **Distance:**
5.8 miles (9.3 km) or 1.6 miles (2.6 km)

 **Time:**
2 hour 30 minutes

Extend the first walk to include a visit to the Norman church of St. Mary's at Wissington.

Look out for the Medieval painting of a dragon! On the return route, cross into Essex to enjoy beautiful views of the Stour Valley.

Follow 'Historic Nayland' route until you reach bus stop on road into Nayland, then cross road and immediately turn left along far pavement. Continue until beside main road, then carefully cross road using pedestrian crossing. On far side, continue along Wiston Road for short way until entrance to Nags Corner Industrial Estate. Carefully cross road and take path exit opposite. Follow path ahead, keeping fence on left. Continue beside fields and through thickets. Ignore all path exits. When you reach wall of Wiston Hall, bear right and then left. Cross lane and visit Wiston Church. Retrace steps for about 200 metres and turn right across bridge (or continue straight here to shorten the route by 2 miles*). Follow path ahead through willow plantation. Cross bridge and go through thicket. At field edge and path junction, turn



right and follow path to lane (the official footpath runs across field, but path may follow field edge). Turn left and follow lane uphill. At left bend, take path off left beside hedge. Follow path for some distance between fields. At corner of wood, turn right and continue to lane. Turn left and follow lane downhill past houses. Continue past Lower Dairy Farm and then, after about 100 metres, turn left along path. Follow path between hedges, across bridge and then across field. As you near Wiston Mill, turn sharp right. Continue across bridge and beside field to path T junction. Turn right and* retrace path back to main road. Re-cross road and continue straight ahead along pavement into Nayland (you will need to cross to right hand side of road as the left pavement ends). Follow road for some distance, then turn right into High Street. Continue for a short way and turn left into Church Lane. Continue ahead and retrace route back to start.

