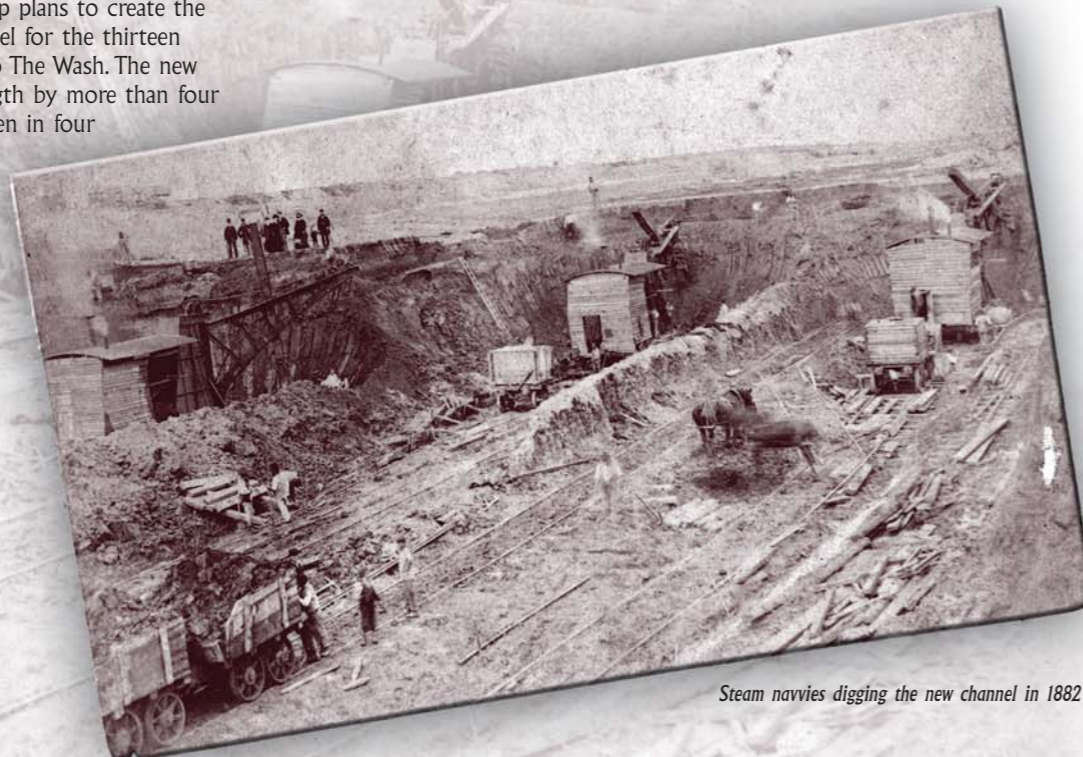


# History

The Haven and surrounding land has seen great changes over the last 200 years. In 1800 the river was very different to the straight engineered channel seen today. It was much wider, had loops and meanders, split several times to go around islands and contained continually shifting sand banks. As the name implies it was a place of safety and refuge for shipping. However the accumulation of sand and silt was increasingly preventing the drainage of about 300 square miles of the hinterland. Moreover Boston was becoming almost unusable as a commercial port. At about this time John Rennie, the celebrated engineer who designed London Bridge, was commissioned to survey the Haven and draw up plans to create the deepest and straightest channel for the thirteen miles from the Black Sluice to The Wash. The new plan reduced the channel length by more than four miles. The work was undertaken in four separate stages and took 80 years to complete.

- The first section, was straightened in 1833 by digging a new channel through Burtons Marsh, cutting off the great bend at Wyberton Roads.



Steam navvies digging the new channel in 1882

- Next in 1841 Captain Beasley undertook the straightening of the river from Skirbeck Church past Slippery Gowt. This was partly achieved by placing bundles of wood called faggots on the outer side of a bend, encouraging the build up of silt and the straightening of the channel.
- In 1860 the two earlier cuts were connected at Blue Anchor Marsh by Robert Reynolds, again by using the faggot method.
- The final cut through the scalp was completed between 1882 and 1884. Lincoln-built Ruston steam navvies were used for this section of the project.
- Information kindly derived from Romans to B&Q: A History of Wyberton, Wyberton History Group, 1999.



## Visiting Havenside Local Nature Reserve:

Havenside is open to the public and visitors are welcome.

The main Pilgrim Fathers Memorial car park is located at the end of Scalp Road, Fishtoft. There are a further four parking bays located beside the entrance to Finnforest off Fishtoft Road. Alternatively why not walk, there are public footpaths to Havenside from both Boston and Fishtoft.

For more information about Havenside Local Nature Reserve please contact:

Boston Borough Council, Municipal Building, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR.  
Tel: 01205 314200

# Havenside Local Nature Reserve Boston



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