

**COUNTY:** LINCOLNSHIRE

**SITE NAME:** ALLINGTON MEADOWS

**DISTRICT:** SOUTH KESTEVEN

**Status:** Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

**Local Planning Authority:** South Kesteven District Council

**National Grid Reference:** SK 871398

**Area:** 4.1 (ha.) 10.1 (ac.)

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 130

**1:10,000:** SK 83 NE

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):**

**Date of Last Revision:** –

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1987

**Date of Last Revision:** –

**Other Information:**

**Description and Reasons for Notification:**

This site is an outstanding example of a traditionally-managed grassland, supporting plant communities typical of alluvial, calcareous clay and loam soils. Such grassland communities are now rare in the East Midlands as they are particularly vulnerable to agricultural improvement.

Allington Meadows comprises five fields of varying size, enclosed by mature hedges with hedgerow trees. To the east, where the site is bordered by the Foston Beck, the hedge contains several fine crack willows. The southern-most, and largest, field has ridge and furrow topography and has been managed as a traditional hay meadow.

A wide range of grasses occurs within the site, including meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, crested dog's tail, *Cynosurus cristatus*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and sweet vernal grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*. Associated herbs include common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, field woodrush *Luzula campestris*, oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*, great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis* and cowslip *Primula veris*.

Where the soils are wetter, particularly in the furrows of the southern-most field, herbs such as cuckooflower *Cardamine pratensis*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, ragged robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi* and creeping jenny *Lysimachia nummularia* occur. Drier areas support plants characteristic of loamy soils, including lady's bedstraw *Galium verum*, meadow saxifrage *Saxifraga granulata*, common sorrel *Rumex acetosa* and bulbous buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus*.

A number of meadow and pasture plants which now have a restricted distribution occur within the site. These include pepper saxifrage *Silaum silaus*, adder's tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, betony *Stachys officinalis* and saw-wort *Serratula tinctoria*.