

**COUNTY:** CAMBRIDGESHIRE **SITE NAME:** CHETTISHAM MEADOW

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

**Local Planning Authorities:** East Cambridgeshire District Council

**National Grid Reference:** TL 541830

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 143                      **1:10,000:** TL 58 SW

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):**                      **Date of Last Revision:**

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1983                      **Date of Last Revision:**

**Area:** 0.6 ha 1.6 ac

**Other information:** This site is managed by the Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely Naturalists' Trust as a nature reserve. It is a new addition to the Cambridgeshire Schedule.

#### **Description and Reasons for Notification**

This site is an example of ridge-and-furrow neutral grassland on calcareous clays. This type of grassland is restricted to southern Britain. Chettisham Meadow is one of the few remaining examples in Cambridgeshire and is one of the best of its kind nationally.

The grassland type is characterised by the grasses red fescue *Festuca rubra*, meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, rough meadow-grass *Poa trivialis* and sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*. The species-rich sward supports a good range of typical meadow plants including pepper saxifrage *Silaum silaus*, adder's-tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, cowslip *Primula veris* and the green-winged orchid *Orchis morio*. The latter species is now quite rare in the county and is decreasing nationally.

The surrounding hedges play an important role in buffering the meadow communities from external influences in this largely arable area.