

File ref:

County: Leicestershire **Site name:** Misterton Marshes
District: Harborough
Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
Local Planning Authority: Harborough District Council
National Grid Reference: SP 557852 **Area:** 6.9 (ha) 17.0 (ac)
Ordnance Survey Sheet 1: 50 000: 140 **1: 10 000:** SP 58 NE, SP 58 SE
Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): **Date of Last Revision:**
Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986 **Date of Last Revision:**

Other Information:

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Misterton Marshes comprise one of the largest remaining blocks of unimproved wetland habitat in Leicestershire. Such areas are now scarce in the English lowlands as a result of drainage and changes in land use.

The marshes have developed on alluvial deposits adjacent to a tributary of the River Swift. Extensive stands of tall fen vegetation are dominated by common reed *Phragmites australis*, reed canary-grass *Phalaris arundinacea* or lesser pond-sedge *Carex acutiformis*. Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, wild angelica *Angelica sylvestris*, water figwort *Scrophularia auriculata* and soft rush *Juncus effusus* are frequent. Other associated species include slender tufted-sedge *Carex acuta*, greater tussock-sedge *C. paniculata*, wood club-rush *Scirpus sylvaticus*, blunt-flowered rush *Juncus subnodulosus* and marsh valerian *Valeriana dioica*. The stream that flows through the site supports the local whorl-grass *Catabrosa aquatica*.

An area of grazed marsh contains species such as brown sedge *Carex disticha*, water avens *Geum rivale*, jointed rush *Juncus articulatus*, marsh horsetail *Equisetum palustre*, ragged robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi* and cuckooflower *Cardamine pratensis*.

The marshes support a diverse breeding bird community including cuckoo, reed bunting and sedge warbler.