

COUNTY: CAMBRIDGESHIRE **SITE NAME:** HEMINGFORD GREY (A604)
MEADOW

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

Local Planning Authorities: Huntingdonshire District Council

National Grid Reference: TL 292692

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 153 **1:10,000:** TL 26 NE

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

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984 **Date of Last Revision:**

Area: 0.56 ha 1.38 ac

Other information: This is a new addition to the Cambridgeshire Schedule. This site is owned and managed as a nature reserve by the Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire Naturalists' Trust. The reserve is known as Arthur's Meadow.

Description and Reasons for Notification

This species-rich meadow is of the calcareous clay pasture type, a type restricted nationally to the south of the country and declining due to changes in traditional management practices.

The grassland type is characterised by the presence of sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, red fescue *Festuca rubra* and downy oat-grass *Helictotrichon pubescens*, together with adder's-tongue fern *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, cowslip *Primula veris* and green-winged orchid *Orchis morio*.

Other grasses include meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, yellow oat-grass *Trisetum flavescens* and quaking-grass *Briza media*. The variety of herbs present includes common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, oxeye daisy *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum* and yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor*. The presence of the orchids common twayblade *Listera ovata* and common spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* in what is a typically green-winged orchid meadow is unusual for this part of England and probably reflects special conditions of soil and drainage.

The boundary hedgerows enhance the value of the site for invertebrates and provide an important buffer to this small meadow in an arable setting.