

COUNTY: SHROPSHIRE

SITE NAME: MONTGOMERY CANAL, ASTON  
LOCKS – KEEPERS BRIDGE

DISTRICT: Oswestry

SITE REF: 15WZS

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

Local Planning Authority: SHROPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, Oswestry Borough Council

National Grid Ref: SJ 328 257, SJ 351 287

Area: 7.28 (ha.) 18 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 126

1:10, 000: SJ 32 NW, SJ 32 NE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): –

Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

New site. This site is complementary to a larger section of the Montgomery Canal in Powys.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

A disused length of canal which is among the best localities for aquatic plants in Shropshire. The site is also of importance in demonstrating aspects of the succession from open water to reedswamp and fen. The Shropshire length of the canal is considered to be complementary to a section in Powys.

This section of the canal is also considered to be a complementary site to the Meres of North Shropshire. It is richer in submerged and floating aquatic plants, and contains some species which were formerly recorded in the meres, but are no longer found in them.

There are extensive areas of open water, with a range of submerged aquatic plants, including fan-leaved water-crowfoot *Ranunculus circinatus* and six species of pondweeds, curled pondweed *Potamogeton crispus*, red pond-weed *P. alpinus*, perfoliate pondweed *P. perfoliatus*, small pondweed *P. berchtoldii*, grass-wrack pondweed *P. compressus* and fennel pondweed *P. pectiatus*. Water-violet *Hottonia palustris* is locally common, and floating water-plantain *Luronium natans*, a rare species, has been found in recent years.

Considerable areas of floating aquatic plant communities occur, dominated mainly by yellow water-lily *Nuphar lutea*, but containing also broad-leaved pondweed *Potamogeton natans*, frogbit *Hydrocharis morsus-ranae* great duckweed *Lemna polyrhiza* and unbranched bur-reed *Sparganium emersum*.

There are extensive areas of fringing reedswamp, composed of reed sweet-grass *Glyceria maxima*, branched bur-reed *Sparganium erectum*, greater and lesser pond sedge *Carex riparia* and *C. acutiformis* and yellow flag *Iris pseudacorus*. Common reed *Phragmites australis* is rare and confined to one area. Flowering-rush *Butomus umbellatus* occurs in the reedswamp.

Adjacent to the canal are extensive areas of scrub and rough grassland which add to the diversity of the site.