

COUNTY: SHROPSHIRE/POWYS

SITE NAME: LLANYMYNECH &
LLYNCLYS HILLS

DISTRICT: Oswestry/Montgomeryshire

SITE REF: 15WGZ

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

Local Planning Authority: SHROPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL/POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL, Oswestry Borough Council/Montgomeryshire District Council

National Grid Ref: SJ 267227

Area: 172.4 (ha.) 426.0 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 126

1:10,000: SJ 22 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1953

Date of Last Revision: 1963

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Part of Llyncllys Hill is registered as Common Land.

Part of the site is managed as a nature reserve by the Shropshire Trust for Nature Conservation.

The site boundary has been modified (extension and reduction).

Llanymynech Golf Course lies entirely within the site.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

An isolated group of Carboniferous limestone hills which have been extensively mined and quarried for stone and minerals. There are extensive grassland, scrub and woodland communities and also natural rock faces, screes, a series of abandoned quarries and areas affected by past lead and copper mining.

This site is particularly important for its limestone plants.

The extensive and varied grassland communities include i) tall, coarse vegetation dominated by cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina* and false brome *Brachypodium sylvaticum*; ii) enclosed fields dominated by a range of grasses and supporting a flora which includes cowslip *Primula veris*, lady's-mantle *Alchemilla vestita* and green-winged orchid *Orchis morio* and iii) open communities with a high proportion of rockrose *Helianthemum nummularium* and lichens especially *Cladonia* spp. which have developed on screes and in association with mine waste. The grasslands of Llanymynech and Llyncllys Hills differ from calcareous grasslands elsewhere in the Midlands owing to the scarcity of stemless thistle *Cirsium acaule*, upright brome *Bromus erectus*, tor grass *Brachypodium pinnatum* and meadow oat *Avenula pratensis*.

Uncommon species occurring in grassland communities on this site include autumn lady's tresses *Spiranthes spiralis*, frog orchid *Coeloglossum viride*, fragrant orchid *Gymnadenia conopsea*, autumn gentian *Gentianella amarella*, small scabious *Scabiosa columbaria*, cat's-foot *Antennaria dioica* and knotted hedge-parsley *Torilis nodosa*.

Much of Llyncllys Hill supports a type of heathland dominated by western gorse *Ulex gallii* on acid soils which have developed as a result of leaching. There are also patches of open grassland in which moonwort *Botrychium lunaria* and greater butterfly orchid *Platanthera chlorantha* occur. Scrub of hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, silver birch *Betula pendula* and bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. is also extensive.

The wooded rocks and cliffs of the west-facing scarp contain many interesting species, despite extensive reforestation. The screes and shaded rocks at the base of the cliff are

especially valuable for mosses and liverworts. The rare endemic whitebeam *Sorbus anglica* occurs on the cliffs.

This site has a rich butterfly fauna which includes grayling *Eumenis semele* and brown argus *Aricia agestis*.