



## Information about Nature in Acton Beauchamp

The following information has been gathered:

1. The area is characterised as rural upland used for arable and livestock farming on a continuous basis for many years. It consists of open fields with boundaries known to have been in existence for many hundreds of years.
2. It has two particularly notable areas of high natural value both of which are protected by local and national regulation:
  - a. Point Coppice and Yagtree Dingle, an area of Ancient Woodland which has been largely untouched. This is protected by English Nature
  - b. Horse Croft Meadow, a Local Wildlife Site designated by Herefordshire Wildlife Trust in 2024
3. Both areas are adjacent to the proposed development for a Solar Farm in Acton Beauchamp, contained in a recent Planning Application which can be found at:  
[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning\\_services/planning\\_application\\_search/details?id=243282&search-term=243282](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=243282&search-term=243282)
4. **The following species have been observed in Point Coppice & Yagtree Dingle**
  - a. **Trees upper canopy:**  
Oak, Elder, Beech, Alder, Birch, Hawthorn, Wild Cherry, Sweet Chestnut, Holly, Goat Willow, European Ash, Blackthorn, Common Hazel, Beaked Hazel, Field Maple, Rowan, European Aspen, White Willow, Guelder Rose.
  - b. **Shrub layer and herbaceous layer:**  
Honeysuckle, Wild Gooseberry, Blackberries, Ivy, Bracken, Nettles, Wood Anemones, Bluebells, Primroses, Dog Mercury, Lesser Celandine, Cleavers, Yellow Archangel, Impatience, Stitch Worth, Snakes Head, Ground Ivy, Cow Parsley, Garlic Mustard, Opposite Leaved Golden Saxifrage, Creeping buttercup, Wild Crocus.
  - c. **Ferns**  
Cystopteris Fern, Oak Fern, Wood Fern, Dryopteris Cristata Fern, Polystichum Fern, Scaly Male Fern

**d. Fungi:**

King Alfred's Cakes, dog lichen, elf cups, turkey tail, hairy curtain crust fungus, giant funnel, jelly ears, woodland inkcap, red belted bracket, yellow brain.

**e. Moss**

Star Moss, Wall Screw Moss, Broom Moss.

**f. Fauna**

Fox, Hare, Badger, Muntjac Deer, Roe Deer, Rabbit, Tawny Owl, Barn Owl, Squirrel, Pheasant, Buzzard, Red Kite (visiting), Goldfinch, Greater Spotted Woodpecker, Green Woodpecker, Blackbird, Wren, Blue Collared Doves, Sparrow Hawk, Merlin, Nuthatch, Kestrel, Wood Pigeon, Treecreeper, hundreds of Starlings resting in the canopy, Wood mouse (have spotted many little mammals on the forest floor over the years but they move so fast which makes identifying them hard), Orange Tip Butterfly, Brown Meadow Butterfly, Buff Tailed Bumble Bee, Wasps and Hornets. Lots of unidentified bees, wasps and birds.

**5. The following is a description of Horse Croft Meadow, Sunny Outlook, Acton Beauchamp, A Designated Local Wildlife Site (LWS) by the owner Wilf Keeley**

We bought the six and a half acres of Horse Croft Meadow with no plan except to plant a few trees. Two horse-chestnuts and an oak were the first of many. We continued to allow the field to be used for sheep grazing and had the hay taken off every summer as late as possible. At one time there had been a pond, as evidenced by the bunches of rushes around a natural hollow in the lower levels. So, we dug out a small one about five metres by five shelving from a few inches to about two and a half feet deep. This now provides a home for newts, toads and many dragonfly larvae.

After planting more native trees - Wild Service, Oak, Walnut, Cherry, Scots pine, Elm, Field Maple, Silver Birch and Willow - we stopped the grazing and let the field be, just having the hay cut once a year. And gradually the field became a meadow with many species of grass and wildflowers.

In 2024, it was awarded the status of a Local Wildlife Site by Herefordshire Wildlife Trust. The following is an extract from the award citation:

*'The primary habitat present on site is grassland, best described as neutral grassland with a very minor presence of calcareous species. Generally speaking, the sward was grass dominated, but species rich overall with nine neutral grassland indicators observed on survey and three indicators from*

*other species lists. These indicators were relatively sparse yet densely concentrated in particular areas, mainly in the west of the site, which was more herb dominated, with the most abundant indicators being bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) and black knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*). There is also a confirmed record from June 2024 of green-winged orchid (*Anacamptis morio*), a species on the England Red-list with a status of vulnerable.*



*Other habitats of note present amongst the grassland included a pond with some native aquatic flora such as yellow flag-iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), breeding newts and marginal scrub. There were also several planted scrub islands comprised of shrubs such as dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) and mature overgrown hedgerows of native species like hazel (*Corylus avellana*), both providing ideal avian habitat which was evidenced by the presence of multiple singing yellowhammers (*Emberiza citrinella*) on survey. A notable element of the grassland was its abundance and variety of grassland butterflies, including species such as common blue (*Polyommatus icarus*), marbled white (*Melanargia galathea*) and small copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*).*

*Priority Habitats: lowland meadow. Priority Species: green-winged orchid, yellowhammer.' (Herefordshire Wildlife Trust)*

**6. Species observed across the site of the proposed planning application:**

**a. Birds of Conservation Concern: (British Trust for Ornithology)**

<b>Red List (Most endangered)</b>	<b>Amber List</b>
Cuckoo	Tawny Owl
Skylark	Sparrowhawk
House Martin	Rook
Field Fare	Willow Warbler
House Sparrow	Whitethroat
Greenfinch	Wren
Linnet	Songthrush
Redpoll	Redwing
Yellowhammer	Dunnock
	Bulfinch

**b. Reptiles and Amphibians observed in the area**

All three of the following Newt species are present on Horse Croft Meadow (a Herefordshire Meadows Trust Local Wildlife Site) and Sunny Outlook, which will be hemmed in on two sides by the proposed development. They are also present in other ponds in the area. These include:

**Great Crested Newt** 'A European protected species. The animals and their eggs, breeding sites and *resting places* are protected by law.' ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) They spend most of their lives out of water. Building and development work can harm Great Crested Newts if it:

- removes habitat or makes it unsuitable
- disconnects or isolates habitats
- changes the habitats of other species, reducing the newts' food sources
- increases the numbers of people, traffic or pollutants in the area

**Palmate Newt** - Protected under the *Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981*

**Common/Smooth Newt** Protected under the *Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981*

**c. Other key species observed in the planning area**

**Amphibians**

Common Frog, Common Toad, Grass snake – all protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981*

**Mammals**

Hedgehog, Wood Mouse, Polecat, Stoat, Weasel, Fox, Hare, Rabbit, Badger, Field Vole, Shrew, Pygmy Shrew, Mole Bats.

## **7. Issues with the Planning Application**

- a. There is a vast amount of recorded wildlife in the area affected by the planning application which has not been recognised by those completing environmental assessments.
- b. There is new information since 2024 with the study of Point Coppice and Horse Croft Meadow which was not known until recently
- c. There is no assessment of the impact of the proposed application on wildlife flora and fauna and wildlife corridors. This is particularly important given the proposal for security fencing.
- d. There is no acknowledgement of the impact on the large number of skylarks which currently fly, feed and nest across the northern area and can be seen and heard from the Bridle Path and PROWs. Their habitat will be destroyed by the array of solar panels despite them being on the RSPB Red List
- e. There has been no assessment of the population and movement of Great Crested Newts and other amphibians around the area where there are a number of pools, ponds and watercourses.
- f. There is no inventory of wildlife, birds, flora and fauna contained in the application some of which indicate they are rare and/or protected species.

**Katherine Smith, Wilf Keeley, Nam Taylor**  
**August 2025**