



## Bunkers Park

### *Monitoring*

Key aspects of any habitat creation scheme are the recording of all management undertaken as well as ecological monitoring. The aims of monitoring are twofold:

1. To ensure that the habitat creation objectives are being met; and
2. To provide information on which future management decisions can be based.

On Bunkers Park monitoring of the wildlife has been carried out since 1997 and each year a report has been written. This has enabled both Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust and Dacorum Borough Council to determine if the management of the park is improving in terms of its wildlife. Management of the park can be altered if necessary in light of the findings.

Since monitoring has taken place the diversity of species within Bunkers Park has been enhanced and many species are increasing in numbers.

#### **Monitoring Methods used**

Monitoring of the park has included key species of the Park. These are :

- The wildflowers and grasses
- The Birds
- The Butterflies.

Each of these are monitored using standard monitoring techniques which remain the same each year.

The park has been divided up into management compartments which enable the results of this monitoring to be assessed in relation to the habitats and management objectives.

Wildflowers and grasses are a key part of the Park. Wildflowers and grasses not only are a colourful addition to the Park but provide important food sources from their nectar and seeds they produce. Some wildflowers and grasses such as Nettles *Urtica dioica* if not properly controlled can be invasive resulting in a loss of other wildflowers. Monitoring checks that the correct balance of plants continues to exist. If this balance is out then management can be adjusted to address this.



Monitoring provides an indication of the bird populations using the Park. This allows the Trust and Dacorum Borough Council to determine if the management is correct particularly to ensure that those species of conservation concern using the Park are protected.

Butterflies use a variety of habitats from woodlands to short and tall grasslands. As such these provide a good indication of the quality of the habitat for them and other invertebrates.