



## Bunkers Park

### *Hedgerows and Woodlands*

#### ***Hedgerows***

In Bunkers Park hedgerows form an important wildlife feature of the site. They provide an essential habitat for small mammals especially in the winter months when they seek a safe, weatherproof nest in which to hibernate. Hedgerows also provide an important habitat for nesting and feeding birds.

Within Bunkers Park remnants of former hedges can still be seen in the centre of the site. However the main interest is provided by the thick mature double hedge along Bunkers Lane. This has recently been dated to the medieval period.

Woodlands when fully established can be rich in wildlife species such as mosses, lichens and fungi in addition to trees, shrubs, wildflowers, mammals, birds and insects.

#### ***Woodlands***

The isolation of woodlands within the countryside has become of concern to nature conservation. Where woodlands are isolated populations of characteristic flora and fauna are in danger of becoming confined to particular sites. This isolation increases the chance of small populations becoming extinct in response to factors such as natural population fluctuations or pollution. Once extinct these species will find it harder to re-colonise from other sites. By re-creating new woodland areas and linking them with existing hedgerows and grassland more potential habitat can be provided.

On Bunkers Park new woodland areas have been created. In February/ March 1997 3,000 people including 600 children from nearby schools helped plant a 1.0 hectare plot of future hazel coppice over a two week period. Since then around 10 hectares of new woodland have been planted with a mixture of locally occurring native trees and shrubs. This area is now known as Chambersbury Wood and will eventually grow to become a rich wildlife area. The planting of native rather than introduced tree and shrubs is beneficial because wildlife is adapted to these species.

Trees and shrubs that can be seen within the woodlands and hedgerows of Bunkers Park include: Beech *Fagus sylvatica*, Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur*, Holly *Ilex aquifolium*, Wild Cherry *Prunus avium*, Silver Birch *Betula pendula*, Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, Sessile Oak *Quercus petraea*, Hazel *Corylus avellana*, Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* and Guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*.