



Hampton Park Trail Information

History: Hampton Park lies within Bishopdown Farm which, as Bishopdown, was part of the bishop's manor of Milford. The first lease of the manor as a whole was made in 1549 to Sir William Herbert (later Earl of Pembroke, d. 1570), for 99 years at an annual rent of £90 14s. In 1661 began a series of leases to members of the family of Bishop Humphrey HENCHMAN. When the manor was first leased as a whole in 1549, Bishopdown Farm was reserved from the lease, and continued to be separately dealt with in the 16th and 17th centuries. In 1650, apart from Bishopdown Farm and a few cottages and orchards, the bishop's manor consisted of 19 tenements varying in size between 10 and 100 acres; totalling about 700 acres in all. The mid-18th Century Grade II listed timber barns have been converted into accommodation. Housing development began north of the cemetery in 1957 and has continued in several phases since then.



The photograph to the left shows an aerial view of Hampton Park in the early 1990s before a significant increase in the number of houses when the surrounding land was still arable farming. A further housing development will fill in the right hand side of the photograph and the remainder of the surrounding land will be developed as amenity green space.

The HP Trail was planted with trees just before this photo was taken with the result that you can see today of a well developed green corridor around the original estate. With internal planting within the estate and maturing gardens there has been a significant increase in some wildlife, notably small birds and mammals. Keep an eye out for raptors: Sparrowhawks are quite common with such a ready supply of garden birds! Buzzards and the occasional Red Kite can also be seen circling in the skies and Skylarks can be heard for most of the year. Mallard ducks have nested in garden ponds which are also visited in the early morning by Herons looking for an easy meal.

In hot summery weather the verges have a good selection of butterflies although moths and insects generally have suffered a significant reduction in common with large parts of the UK. With that decline we have also lost the bats that could be seen and heard at dusk.