

# WORK AND PLAY

Heaths may look wild and untouched, but they are actually closely linked to people.

For thousands of years local people worked on them, using areas to graze animals, cutting bracken for bedding, wood, gorse or heather turves for fuel, and timber for building. Over the last 200 years people have stopped using them in this way, and so many have become overgrown with scrub and trees.

Other heaths have disappeared under housing, or have been ploughed up for agriculture or planted for forestry. Heaths are some of the best places in Surrey to escape to; for fresh air, exercise, to relax and to enjoy wildlife. They have become valuable places for recreation, rather than work.

Although we no longer rely on heaths for our living, if we want to keep enjoying them we need to take action to look after them.

Common darter