

NEWS RELEASE – Monday 7 March 2011

Community dig in at new nature reserve

Wiltshire's biggest tree planting scheme was completed on Saturday 5 March when over 100 enthusiastic nature lovers planted the final 1,000 trees on the new Penn Wood nature reserve in High Penn, Calne.

Toddlers, teenagers, parents and pensioners from the local community together with the Mayor of Calne, Helen Plenty, braved grey skies and icy winds to spend the morning digging holes, planting saplings and erecting tree guards to complete the project.



Image: (left to right) Alan Pardoe, Chairman of Hills, Dr Gary Mantle MBE, director of Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, Calne Town Mayor, Councillor Helen Plenty and Mike Hill, chief executive of Hills

“We had a fantastic turnout,” said Mike Hill, chief executive of Hills Group.
“Everyone got stuck in and after a couple of hours all the trees were planted.
I would like to extend a big thank you to everyone who joined in to help us and

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especially to the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and Southern Forestry for their invaluable guidance and support on this project – it was a great success. Penn Wood is a beautiful green open space for the community of Calne to enjoy.”

The 24 acre reserve is now home to 10,000 trees including Downy birch, Oak, Ash, Blackthorn, Lime and a few Norway spruce and Scots pine.

Partners in the scheme, Southern Forestry and Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, assisted Hills in planning the layout of the reserve to ensure a rich source of food for wildlife and insects and to improve the biodiversity of the area.

In addition to planting trees, visitors were able to explore the reserve and look out for signs of roe deer, badgers, kestrels, buzzards and owls. Hibernacula for slow worms, along with two ponds for frogs, toads, water living plants and creatures are also featured on the reserve. **ENDS**

Notes to editors:

- The area now known as Penn Wood, High Penn was purchased by Hills in the 1930s and worked as a sandpit and then inert tip until its closure in the 1950s following which it was restored to pasture for grazing sheep and cattle.
- In June 2003 hibernation mounds and heat traps were created at Penn Wood for a colony of 500 slow worms when they were relocated from a nearby Hills Homes development site in Calne.
- Hills secured funding from the Forestry Commission in 2009 to create a new nature reserve on the restored sandpit and inert tip at Penn Wood
- Hills has worked in partnership with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust for over 20 years to support nature conservation and help wildlife in Wiltshire adapt to a changing climate



- The site will be managed by the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and is open to the public all year round

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Media contact:

Monique Hayes, Communications Officer, The Hills Group Limited

Tel: 01672 518941 mhayes@hills-group.co.uk

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