

## Archaeology / Geology

Hills Quarry Products provides significant resources toward identification, excavation, recording and reporting of the archaeology and geology in the areas where the company has established sand and gravel quarries.

This work relies heavily on close working partnerships with local planning authorities, academic entities and community interest groups. The co-operation provided by Hills to these partners has been acknowledged as 'crucial to the success of a project' - something which Hills is extremely proud of and keen to maintain.

Two examples of Hills support are:

### Learning more at Cotswold Community

The gravel terraces of the River Thames are rich in the remains of our ancestors, from the time of the first farmers in the country 6,000 years ago to the present day.

In particular, sand and gravel extraction by Hills has provided the Oxford Archaeological Unit and Thames Valley Archaeology Services with a valuable opportunity to investigate traces of occupation and burial sites and recreate a picture of the changing landscape of the Cotswold Community, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire areas over six million years.



Excavation of a late Roman cemetery



Hills spent over £1 million to fund the discovery of a significant Bronze Age farming settlement in the Cotswold Community area.

One of the oldest boundaries in Britain, made up of hundreds of pits, was found running parallel to the Gloucestershire / Wiltshire county boundary. Careful topsoil stripping by Hills exposed small circular 3,500 year old houses, animal enclosures and wells.

Remains of pot found in a 'Beaker grave'

The Romans were attracted to the area by the rich agricultural land and built one of their major towns at Cirencester. A Roman farmstead has also been excavated in the Cotswold Community dig along with timber hall buildings of the Saxons, pottery and evidence of textile production.



The findings of this major archaeological site in the Upper Thames Valley, of which Hills funded the fieldwork, have been recorded in a book 'Evolution of a Farming Community in the Upper Thames Valley' published in 2010 and is the source for the images provided here.

Artist's reconstruction of a roundhouse

### Discovering fossils - Latton Quarry

Gravel extraction provides a unique educational opportunity to see rocks that are rarely exposed inland.

Hills works with the Cotswold Water Park Trust and Discovering Fossils to provide opportunities for people of all ages to visit its quarries to hear about the fascinating geology, fossils and prehistory of the local area.

For example, fossils from as far back as the Jurassic period, 165 million years ago, and Ice Age mammoth teeth that are only a mere 49,000 years old have all been found at Latton Quarry,

deposited there by the River Thames which was much bigger in the past than it is today.



Mammoth tooth

Other finds include a Woolly Rhinoceros tooth, ammonites, fossil wood and corals, and two ice age hand axes which indicate that early man was once in the area around 120,000 years ago.



Ammonite