

NEWS RELEASE – 10 October 2016

STARTS

A happy ending to Leanne's rubbish day

A Royal Wotton Bassett woman says she is 'so grateful' to the recycling team who rescued her phone – containing thousands of photos of her son growing up – after she accidentally threw it away.

Leanne Sowerby, aged 26, was out shopping with her husband Rowan when she realised her phone was missing – after she had taken out the recycling.

She rushed home only to find the kerbside recycling bin had already been collected. She frantically tried calling the mobile but no-one answered.

She was 'heartbroken' to think the 3,500 photographs of her seven-month-old son Harry growing up from birth, Rowan's 30th birthday and their wedding were all lost.

Leanne called Hills Waste Solutions recycling manager Henry Newbery, who suggested she use an app to track her phone's whereabouts.

Leanne discovered the device was at Hills' Porte Marsh Recyclables Management Facility in Calne and Henry set to work trying to find the phone.

Leanne said: "I was absolutely frantic at this point and in floods of tears. I was calling the phone and it was ringing, but after a while it stopped and I thought that was it, it was gone then.

"I'd lost all hope. We drove to Calne just to wait and see, there wasn't anything else we could do."



Recycling manager Henry Newbery with Leanne Sowerby.

Henry found out which vehicle had picked up the recycling bin from Leanne's house and separated it from the rest of the fleet.

The vehicle was unloaded onto the sorting line where staff set to work carefully picking through the recycling.

Henry spotted the phone on the line and picked it up just in time to answer a call from a worried Leanne, who was waiting in the car park.

Henry explained how his team found the phone, and said: "We were so pleased to be able to return Leanne's phone to her with all her photos. It was clear it meant a lot to her and being able to help people like that is a great feeling.

"She was very lucky the phone was in one piece, as the rubbish is compacted inside the collection vehicle and it was in amongst about three-and-a-half tonnes of material.

"I am very grateful for the hardworking team here at Porte Marsh. They were only too happy to help and thanks to their careful sorting we managed to get the phone back in one piece."

Leanne was so delighted she returned to Porte Marsh with a card and chocolates for the team.

She said: "When I rang and heard someone answer it, I was so happy. It meant everything to me to have my phone back, I would have absolutely heartbroken if it had been lost.

"I am so, so lucky and so grateful. I am just so glad I didn't put it in the garden bin!"

Henry added: "We often get contacted by people who have accidentally thrown away something important and we always try our absolute utmost to find the item.



“The most important thing is, if you have thrown away something precious, to call us as soon as you realise it is missing – time is of the essence.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Hills Waste Solutions offers a range of specialist waste management and recycling services to both the public and private sector. It is a dynamic regional business which, while centred on Wiltshire, has stretched its boundaries into neighbouring areas to become one of the region’s largest providers of waste solutions. Hills Waste Solutions is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Hills Group Limited, a privately owned family company established in 1900.

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