



Working together in Wiltshire

Foreword by Gary Mantle

The Hills Group has played an active part in Wiltshire life for more than 100 years. It has demonstrated its commitment to the communities it serves and it is the company’s particular dedication to Wiltshire’s wildlife that we celebrate here.

The Hills Group has been an inspiration to all those working to protect and restore Wiltshire’s natural environment for its local communities. Its funding has made it possible to purchase special wildlife sites, facilitate public enjoyment and appreciation of the natural environment and increase the knowledge and understanding of the natural world among children.

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (WWT) is just one of many organisations to have benefited from The Hills Group’s support through the Landfill Communities Fund, and through the direct generosity of the company itself, helping us to achieve our vision of a sustainable future for wildlife and people.

We are very lucky to have worked in partnership with The Hills Group since 1990. This collaboration has recently reached a major milestone with the total amount given by the company to the Trust exceeding £8,000,000 in 2018. This tremendous landmark in the Trust’s history is a clear sign of The Hills Group’s generosity and the seriousness of its respect for Wiltshire, its natural environment and people.

At a time when funding is difficult to secure and often only short term, the sustained support and continuity of funding from The Hills Group has given the Trust the confidence to tackle difficult challenges. Without the belief shown in our work by the company, we could not have achieved the successes of which we are so proud.

We have highlighted just some examples of how the remarkable support from The Hills Group has resulted in the Trust achieving key outcomes which improve the environment and encourage more people to enjoy the natural world and live more sustainable enriching lives.

Dr Gary Mantle, Chief Executive, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust



Image (front cover):
Save Our Magnificent
Meadows family event
WWT

Images (clockwise):
Wildflower training day
Melissa Spiers
Lower Moor vegetable patch
Emma Kirkup
Small copper
Lance Featherstone



“ We care about the locations that give us our living and are committed to giving something back for the benefit of all communities in Wiltshire. Supporting the Trust ensures that wildlife habitats are created and protected for future generations to enjoy. ”

Mike Hill, Chief Executive, The Hills Group

Image (below):
Spring bluebells
Gary Mantle

Images (opposite clockwise):
Buff-tailed bumblebee
Jon Hawkins | Surrey Hills Photography
Tawny owl
Helen Haden
Hurdle making
WWT
Coombe Bissett
Glyn Coy



Creating Living Landscapes across Wiltshire

Taking a broader approach to management of the countryside and working across large areas of land, known as working at a landscape scale, is fundamental to enabling the adaptation of our natural environment to the effects of climate change.

The Hills Group has made a major contribution to facilitating this approach on Trust sites and within the farming and landowning community. Vital funding from the company has helped the Trust create eight new nature reserves, providing areas rich in wildlife, space for people to enjoy the outdoors and get closer to nature.



Since 1990 Hills has supported the Trust's work in the Braydon Forest area to the west of Swindon. Thanks to their continued support, the Living Landscape which is managed by the Trust is one of the richest wildlife areas in the UK. Elsewhere in the county, Hills' support also covers:



- 4 lakes, 25 acres of wetland, 13 acres of reed bed, 600 metres of the River Wylye at Langford, a visitor centre and an education centre on just one site – Langford Lakes nature reserve at Steeple Langford near Salisbury. Wet grassland has been created here, which has attracted 'schedule one' birds to breed
- Around 180 farmers and landowners managing their land sympathetically for wildlife and people supported by WWT; 37 farmers landowners supported through the Magnificent Meadows project match funded by Hills – including three who have taken green hay from our reserves to create new wild flower rich pasture
- More than 10,000 trees have been planted at High Penn Wood with the help of 100 volunteers, with a further 2,500 planted to soften the effects of Ash dieback on the site
- Otters have finally returned to Wiltshire after 20 years of hard work, and Hills have supported a dragonfly project at Lower Moor and the Cotswold Water Park, with hairy dragonflies and downy emeralds added to the list recently. Little ringed plover have bred on a Trust site. Cranes have been spotted at another reserve (and possibly breeding in Wiltshire). Long term studies show that populations of marsh tit are thriving at Ravensroost and the Firs. Meanwhile our Blakehill site may have become the last one in north Wiltshire host breeding pairs of curlew.



*Image (above):
What lives in the
water at Lower Moor?
Ryan Tabor WWT*

*Image (opposite):
Male southern
hawker dragonfly
Steve Day*



Image (left):
Brown hare
Elliot Neep

Images (opposite):
Kingfisher
Malcolm Brown
Volunteers at
Distillery Meadows
Ryan Tabor

Supporting the Trust’s activities

Support from The Hills Group has given Wiltshire Wildlife Trust the confidence to develop and grow as an organisation and have the courage to work in new and innovative ways. The partnership has enabled the Trust to play its part in creating a greener Wiltshire, including encouraging communities to live more sustainably.

By demonstrating its confidence in the Trust’s ability to deliver, The Hills Group’s support has enabled the Trust to secure millions of pounds from other funders.



- Wiltshire Wildlife magazine becomes full colour, helping to spread the word about wildlife, environmental issues and sustainable lifestyles
- An image library of more than 10,000 images of nearly 60 wildlife sites provides a priceless resource
- Hundreds of volunteers of all ages are equipped and trained to help deliver our vision, building social cohesion and delivering vital conservation work.

Inspiring the next generation

The Hills Group has made a major contribution to ensuring Wiltshire is a county fit for our children to grow up in, and for them to become good environmental citizens of the future, caring for their surroundings.

- In one year alone the Waste Education Tea engaged 5,598 students from 36 schools and 23 preschools and youth groups in meaningful recycling sessions such as 'Trashion Shows' and community waste prevention campaigns
- Solar panels demonstrate renewable energy at Langford Lakes Education Centre
- Last year just over 36 tonnes of white goods and furniture goods from Household Recycling Centres have been prevented from entering the waste stream, through being mended and serviced at the Repair Academy and then sold at a low cost to people in need
- Thousands of Wiltshire's children can experience their natural environment through a chain of flower-rich meadows at Lower Moor
- Over 1,000 school children in Westbury designed cotton bags, supplied by The Hills Group, with environmental messages they had learnt through the Trust's Recycle for Wiltshire waste programme, which is funded by Wiltshire Council
- Hundreds of head teachers, teachers and governors can now embed sustainability principles into their schools' ethos through conferences, advice sessions and Your Guide to Becoming a Sustainable School.



Image (above):
Pond dipping at Conigre Mead
Gail Grimes

Images (opposite):
Cotton bag winners, Westbury
Ralph Harvey
Repair Academy workshop
Doug North
Making bird boxes
Ralph Harvey



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Photo credits left to right:

Coombe Bissett Down sheep
Barry Craske

Orange tip on bluebell
Stephen Davis

WWT reserve volunteers
Dean Sherwin

Woodpeckers
Janet and Philip Male