

intouch

Women working in waste management

Intouch meets five female Municipal Collections' employees
Pages 10-11

Beverley Hill
1935-2019

Remembered on
pages 4 and 5

In the bag – Quarry Products' and Day Aggregates' partnership continues Page 8

Creature comforts – How Homes looks after nature Pages 18 & 19



PLUS
Dingbats
is back!

but harder than before
(see back page)

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2020 Calendar photocall Page 20

Pictured on the cover is Rebekah Gibbs LGV driver, (Amesbury depot), who is featured on pages 10-11 in our feature on women working in waste management.



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Viewpoint

The old order changeth...

The family, the company and the world lost a great man with the passing of Beverley Hill in April. Bev was a true gentleman with an unique sense of humour! I know that senior management will miss his highly technical observations and questions during the annual shareholder site tours. We celebrate his life in words and pictures on pages 4 – 5.



Military engagement...

The company's history has been intertwined with the military and Wiltshire Council for many years and so it is with great pride that we are supporting such a prestigious event as the Armed Forces Day in Salisbury at the end of June. Read more about it on the opposite page.

The changing face of waste

The waste industry has not, historically, attracted too many women employees so it is wonderful to read the stories on pages 10 – 11 of those who have chosen the industry in which to forge their careers. It would be heartening to see many more women join the industry in the years to come!

The evergreen plant at Shorncombe

The processing plant at Shorncombe Quarry which opened in the late 1980s was originally expected to operate until the mid 90s. However, due to a series of extensions, the old work horse is still going and on pages 16 – 17 you can read about the latest extension which means it could be operating well into its thirties!

I wish you all a long, hot summer!

Mike Hill, chief executive

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Hills shows its support for the Armed Forces

The Hills Group will be an Official Supplier and sponsor to the National Armed Forces Day event, organised by Wiltshire Council to be held in Salisbury from 28-30 June.

Hills will provide waste management and recycling services free of charge for a packed programme which is expected to attract tens of thousands of visitors over the three days. Bespoke 'recycling stations' are being manufactured and Waste Solutions' employees will be working in the city centre and at the main event space – Hudson's Field on the northern edge of Salisbury.

Friday will include a private event to say thank you to serving military personnel and their families, followed by a concert that is open to the public.

On Saturday morning there will be a military parade through the streets of Salisbury city centre – which will be followed by an air show, military demonstrations and live entertainment culminating with fireworks. Sunday focuses on veterans and young people – those who have served and those who may serve with a commemoration and drumhead

service, supported by the Royal British Legion. There will also be the opportunity to help the event attempt to break a record by creating the world's largest human poppy in the main arena.

Mike Hill, chief executive said: "As a business we have close connections with the military through our longstanding contract with KBR Aspire Defence – providing waste management and recycling for the army barracks on Salisbury Plain and Aldershot. We also have a number of employees who have served in the Forces – so we are delighted to play such a pivotal role in this prestigious and high profile event."

For more information about the Armed Forces Day Event and to secure tickets visit wiltshire.gov.uk/salisbury-afd





Beverley is seated bottom right in a family photo from 1943.



Tony, Beverley, Richard, Robert, Ted and Victor Hill at the old Marlborough office.

Obituary – Beverley Hill 1935-2019

We sadly have to report that Hills shareholder and main board director Beverley Hill has passed away following a brief illness. Beverley was the cousin of former chairman Robert Hill and he played his own important role in the Hills business – as highlighted in the following tribute.

Beverley Hill, the second child of Mervyn and Betty Hill, was born in 1935. He attended The High School, Swindon, and then Purton Stoke Preparatory School and Bradfield College near Reading – where he played for the 1st XI at football and was a first violinist in the college orchestra.

He entered the Hills business at the age of 18 as an engineering apprentice and studied at the Swindon Technical College – where his technical drawing tutor introduced Beverley to the Swindon Gliding Club at South Marston and he went on to become a committee member. He gained his private pilot's licence in 1961, and qualified as a British Gliding Association instructor in 1969, instructing at South Marston airfield until 1983.

His other interests included aerial photography and extended to developing an airborne camera rig, which was used as an aid to company planning applications and recording mineral extraction progress.



As a toddler Beverley recalled being taken by his father on weekly visits to outlying gravel pits and watching the machines and plant at work. His first task in the Swindon workshop was replacing broken wooden shafts of No 2 shovels, an essential accessory for every tipper vehicle. Later he spent time at Purton, South Cerney and Badbury under the guidance of his uncle Harold Hill.

At the Kingshill site Beverley said he was lucky to be at the centre of things, working alongside his father for many years, and providing back-up for all the cousins in their various enterprises.

Beverley was involved in the Hills Haulage (Swindon) business and was responsible at one time for vehicle liveries; overseeing the in-house painting and sign writing of lorries.

Beverley was also in charge of engineering maintenance



Beverley speaks with Nick King and Peter Andrew (below) during shareholder site tours.



Beverley and Naomi on their wedding day.

and he had an extension at his home in Okus to incorporate a radio system so if there was a problem at any of the gravel plants, the operators could ask for advice or assistance at any time of the day or night. His engineering and technical drawing skills were called upon during Hills' foray into reconstituted Cotswold stone 'Hillstone' in the late 1960s and 1970s – designing the wooden moulds to produce paving slabs, window quoins, coping stones and garden seats.

In an interview for Hills' 2000 millennium history brochure Beverley said: "I suppose my most interesting memories are of the development and planning negotiations concerning 'dry digging' of gravel, without which we would not have been able to take the initiative in supplying to the large motorway contracts. Also, setting up the skip vehicle operation, obtaining planning and site licences for waste disposal at Purton and Badbury were significant in our progress into the commercial waste field."

Beverley retired from active participation in the business in 1988 and lived in Uley near Dursley, with his wife Naomi who he married in July 2004. He will be dearly missed by his widow Naomi, his three children, Fiona, Jim and Gemma and all those who knew him.

Naomi and his children were joined by the extended family and many of Beverley's friends on a beautiful, sunny day at Westerleigh Crematorium near Yate at the end of the April to celebrate and remember his life.

The perfect weather conditions allowed for the ultimate tribute befitting of a man who loved flying, as Bev's own plane – a Tecnam two-seater piloted by his engineer Toby Wilcox – conducted a series of fly-pasts over those gathered below.



Beverley (first right) with shareholders and directors at Hills 80th anniversary celebrations.



Tony, Robert and Beverley Hill.



Beverley (left) with chairman Alan Pardoe and chief executive Mike Hill.



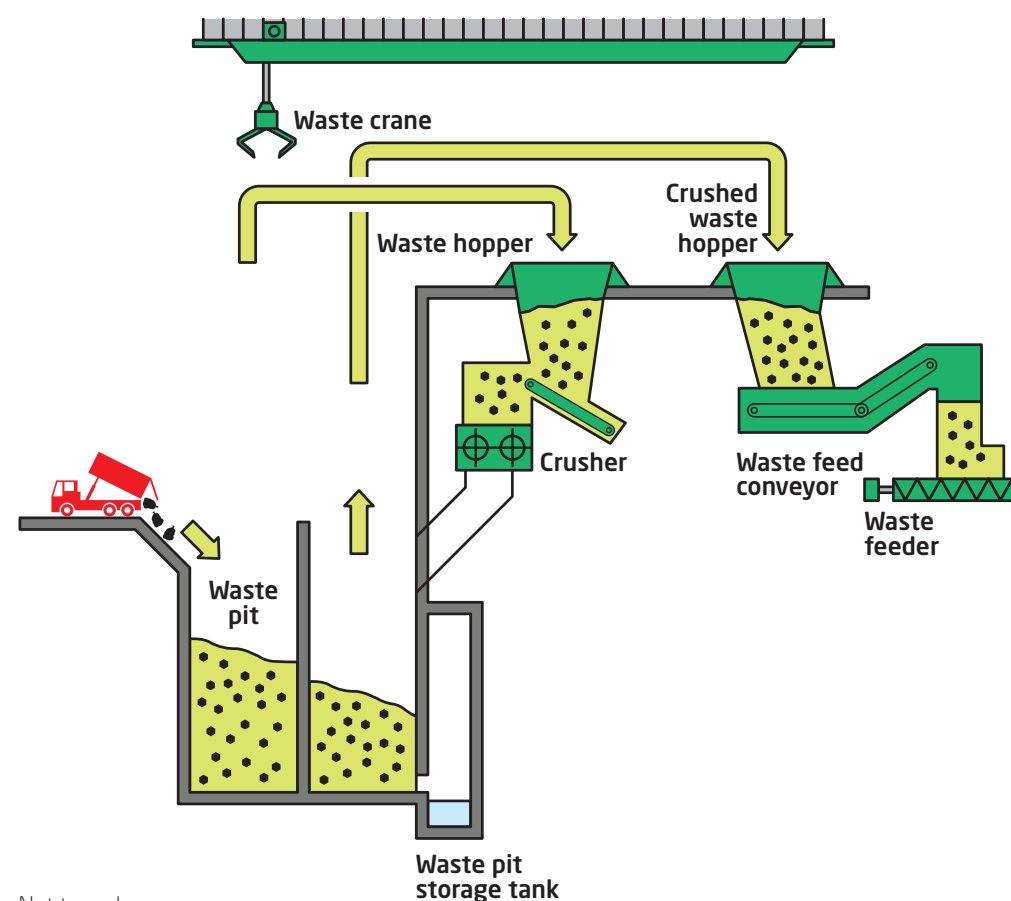
Richard and Beverley Hill.

Northacre Renewable Energy

Gasification – generating power from waste

Waste feedstock storage and preparation

The non-recyclable waste feedstock is delivered to the facility – then stored and prepared to meet gasification process requirements.

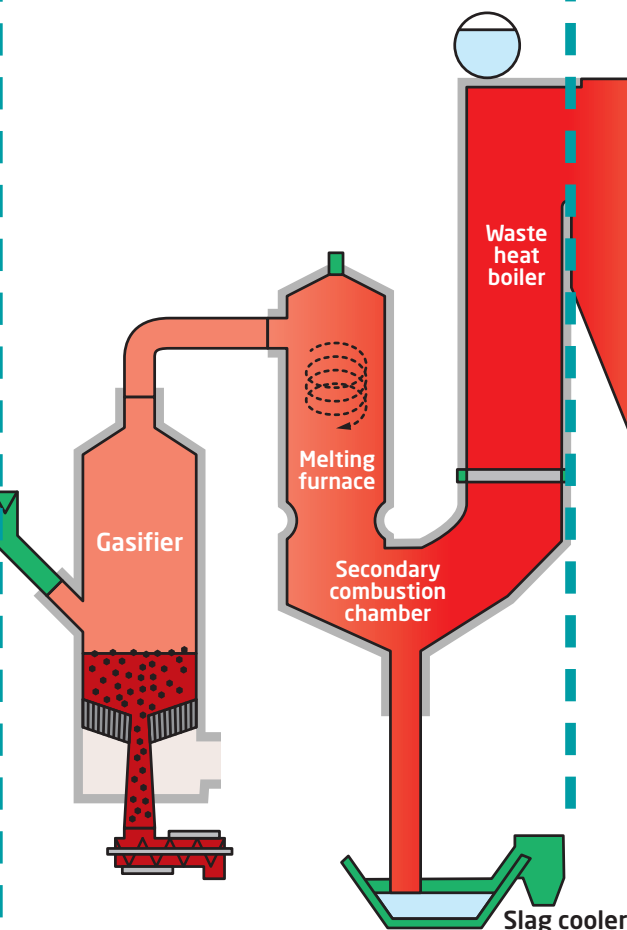


Gasification

The feedstock is gasified in a controlled environment (air and temperature) to produce synthesis gas or 'syngas'.

Combustion

Syngas is combusted with temperatures maintained in excess of 850°C.

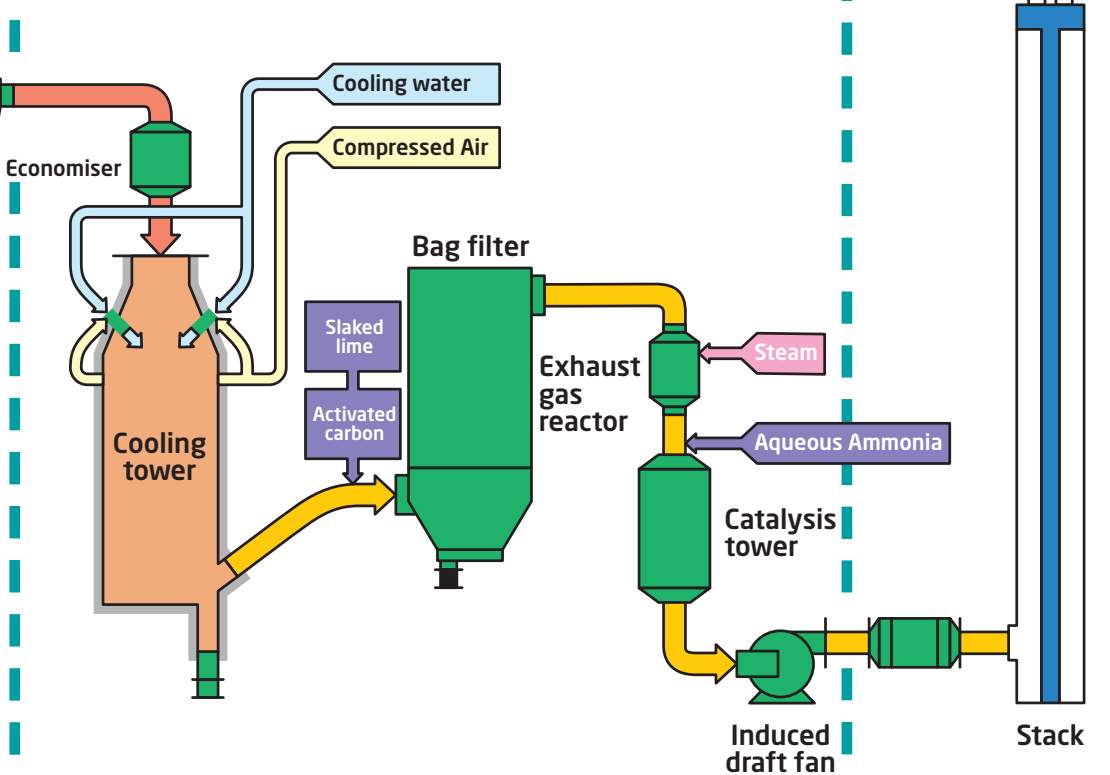


Energy recovery

Hot gases from the combustion process are passed through a boiler to generate steam which is passed to a steam turbine generator to produce electricity. Steam is then condensed before being returned to the boiler.

Flue gas treatment

Combustion gases pass through a flue gas cleaning process to remove particles and treat combustion gas to meet Environment Agency air quality requirements.



Stack

Combustion gases are drawn by fan through the process and passed through stack to atmosphere. There will be 24/7, 365 days a year emissions monitoring to meet the Environment Agency's requirements.

Not to scale.

Planning permission for the Northacre Renewable Energy (NRE), advanced thermal treatment facility, was granted by Wiltshire Council in January but has now been subject to a request for 'call-in' by the Secretary of State. The facility will use the latest, highly efficient 'gasification' technology to turn non-recyclable waste from Wiltshire into 25.5MW of renewable energy – enough to power up to 46,000 homes.

Gasification should not be confused with incineration as they are different processes. Incineration burns waste at a high temperature, however gasification treats waste at extremely high temperatures, which turns the waste material into a gas known as Syngas. This gas is then combusted to generate steam, which is passed through a turbine to produce electricity. The gasification process is summarised in the diagram below:

Bags of success at Mortimer Quarry

Quarry Products and Day Aggregates (commonly known as 'Days') have traded with each other for many years and due to the success and sales expansion of Days' bagged aggregates, the collaboration of the two businesses has continued to grow from strength to strength.

Quarry Products has recently enabled Days to open another bagging plant, this time at Hills' Mortimer Quarry near Reading. The facility is the third of its kind at a Hills quarry.

Jonathan Day, merchant sales director of Day Aggregates (pictured below left), explains: "Building a bagging plant at Mortimer Quarry was a perfect opportunity for us to work with Hills again and this was also due to the success of our other two plants already operating at Hills' Cerney Wick and Woodsford quarries."

The bagging plant employs six people to provide bagged sand and aggregates for customers including Travis Perkins, Jewson and Buildbase.

Days is bagging 370 tonnes of aggregate per day at Mortimer Quarry. Peter Andrew, Group director Quarry Products (pictured below right), added: "The partnership between Hills and Days is mutually beneficial and the continued success of the bagging plants at our quarries strengthens the possibility of extending the relationship to other Hills' sites in the future."

"We are building on a fantastic relationship that we have with Hills' and we are very pleased to be working together again on a great site."

Jonathan Day, merchant sales director, Day Aggregates



New Group director appointed



Ed Dodd has been appointed as Group director - Waste and resource management from 1 June.

Ed will be responsible for managing and overseeing the waste management and treatment activities

within Waste Solutions and Municipal Collections - as well as the Group's involvement in Northacre Renewable Energy's waste to energy project.

Mike Hill, chief executive said: "We could soon be coming to the end of a long period of planning uncertainty for our waste activities and I would like to congratulate Ed and look forward to working with him during what will hopefully be an exciting period of growth and consolidation."

Ed began his career in waste management in 1996 focusing on the technical and scientific aspects of the industry and

then gradually moved into engineering, contract and project management. In 2003 he embarked on a two year project working for the British Antarctic Survey based in Antarctica supporting Antarctic research.

Ed joined Hills in 2006 as waste facilities manager and became a divisional director of Waste Solutions in 2012. He has been responsible for the delivery of the construction and commissioning of the Northacre mechanical biological treatment plant in Westbury and more latterly developing the Northacre Renewable Energy facility.

Ed said: "It is an exciting time in the sector with many significant developments and transformations. Hills is in a phase of unprecedented growth which brings huge opportunities and challenges and I am looking forward to implementing and leading the change for the next generation."

A Fellow of the Geological Society, Ed holds a degree in Environmental Geoscience and an MSc in Applied Environmental Geology. He is a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management and a Chartered Environmentalist through the Society for the Environment.

Aidan completes UK's first MPO apprenticeship



Chief executive Mike Hill congratulates Aidan Jeffreys with Peter Andrew.

Aidan Jeffreys has successfully completed his Level 2 Mineral Processing Mobile and Static Plant Operator (MPO) apprenticeship and he is the first person in the UK to do so.

Aidan started his apprenticeship in September 2017. Reflecting on the experience he said: "I have really enjoyed

"We hope Aidan is the first of many apprentices to join the company"

Peter Andrew, Group director Quarry Products

it. At first it was daunting but once I learnt the processes, the aggregates and how to use the equipment, the training became easier."

"Everyone has been helpful, patient and friendly throughout and support from my colleagues on site helped me to progress quickly and complete the programme in only 15 months."

Peter Andrew, Group director Quarry Products, said: "We are delighted that Aidan completed his apprenticeship so successfully, he has settled in extremely well and coped well with the pressures of learning whilst training."

Aidan will continue to work at Hills' Shorncote Quarry near Cirencester where he undertook his training.

Women working in waste management

The image of the waste industry is one that has traditionally been perceived as male dominated, but in an industry that is changing in the perception of the public, **intouch** meets up with five women who have chosen to build their careers with Hills in this fast moving and innovative sector.

Mel Scott

Waste and recycling collection manager, North (Chippenham depot)

Mel's career in the waste industry began in 1983 when she left school to start a Local Government Management Trainee scheme with the former West Wiltshire District Council (WADC). Mel was also working toward an Institute of Waste Management qualification and attended Hackney College once a week, where her law tutor was Sean Wallis, better known as the Dark Destroyer from the ITV game show The Chase!

WADC was one of the first local authorities to introduce wheelie bins and Mel remembers meeting some members of the public who were: "...somewhat resistant to the new fangled idea of a bin which could be moved on wheels!"

Mel now runs the busy Chippenham depot for Municipal Collections and it's a role she clearly relishes: "I really enjoy working on the front line at the depot and I don't think being a woman really matters, we all focus on providing a good service and can have a laugh along the way. There are plenty of personnel issues to deal with but I enjoy helping people."



Gill Scovell

Kerbside supervisor, (Trowbridge depot)

Gill wanted to be a truck driver since she was three years old - and her career dreams came true as she spent 17 years driving touring coaches and four months as an agency driver, before joining Municipal Collections as a kerbside supervisor.

Gill's working day starts at 6am: "I am out and about in the yard getting the drivers and crews away on their rounds. I also do crew checks, assisted collection assessments and site visits. Time at the office includes monitoring the Bartec units, which tell us how the crews are getting on. In the afternoon I also do staff training and as I say to the drivers, I wouldn't ask you to do anything I wouldn't do myself."

"I was the only woman at the Amesbury site for a year and working with so many men is fine. They respect me as I've done the job and I would definitely recommend the waste industry for any women considering it."



Julie Jenkins

HR advisor, (County Park)

Julie joined The Hills Group Human Resources team just over a year ago and specialises in providing HR support for Municipal Collections' managers and supervisors.

"I aim to visit a couple of depots every week, to be on site for any queries employees have and to provide policy guidance to managers. I like being able to get out to other sites and meet the wider workforce. Having a visible HR presence helps the depot management team feel supported and I've enjoyed being involved with the TUPE transition and providing support through a challenging period of change."

"I always find it encouraging that Hills supports the employment and progression of women in what might have traditionally been seen as 'male' roles and I haven't experienced or felt at a disadvantage at all being a woman in a male dominated industry."



Kelly Ottaway

Kerbside loader, (Devizes depot)

Kelly worked as an agency kerbside loader for Wiltshire Council for around a year before getting a full-time contract with Municipal Collections and she clearly enjoys her work:

"I love getting out and about, seeing parts of Wiltshire I otherwise wouldn't have seen. The sunrises over the countryside can be beautiful and there are lots of opportunities for spotting wildlife early in the mornings."

"I don't find working with so many male colleagues a problem at all, I just feel like one of the guys. The public can have the funniest reactions though - one morning I was working with another female loader, we were chased down

the road by someone asking if we were doing it for charity as she hadn't seen women picking up the bins before!

"I would recommend a job with Municipal Collections to other women. It can be hard work at times but the crews can have a great laugh and it's much cheaper than a gym membership when it comes to getting fit!"



Rebekah Gibbs

LGV driver, (Amesbury depot)

Rebekah has worked as a LGV driver with Hills for three years and is based out of Municipal Collections' Amesbury depot which collects the kerbside black boxes of recycling (glass, tins, cans, paper and clothes etc).

"I start my day by doing my walk around checks, making sure everything on the truck is functional and safe. I'll then get my loaders for the day and we start our round. Once the round is finished we go back to the yard and tip the truck so that it's empty for the morning and then I'll fuel it and park it up."

"I like getting to work within the community, most people will say good morning and wish you a good day. Also the

people you are working with will make or break your day. Luckily we have a good bunch and the days seem to go quicker especially when you all help each other."

"Working in a male dominated industry doesn't bother me in the slightest. The men I work with are lovely and such a laugh. I would recommend other women to try the waste industry. It's not going to be for everyone but it's such an amazing job and I think once you try it you'll love it."



The road to resource recovery

LGV relief road and Sands Farm facility update

Planning permission for the construction of an internal LGV relief road linking the existing Lower Compton site and the Sands Farm facility was granted in August last year. Since then a lot has been happening, and the timeline at the bottom of the page shows some of the key steps in the process that should see the road completed for use later this year.

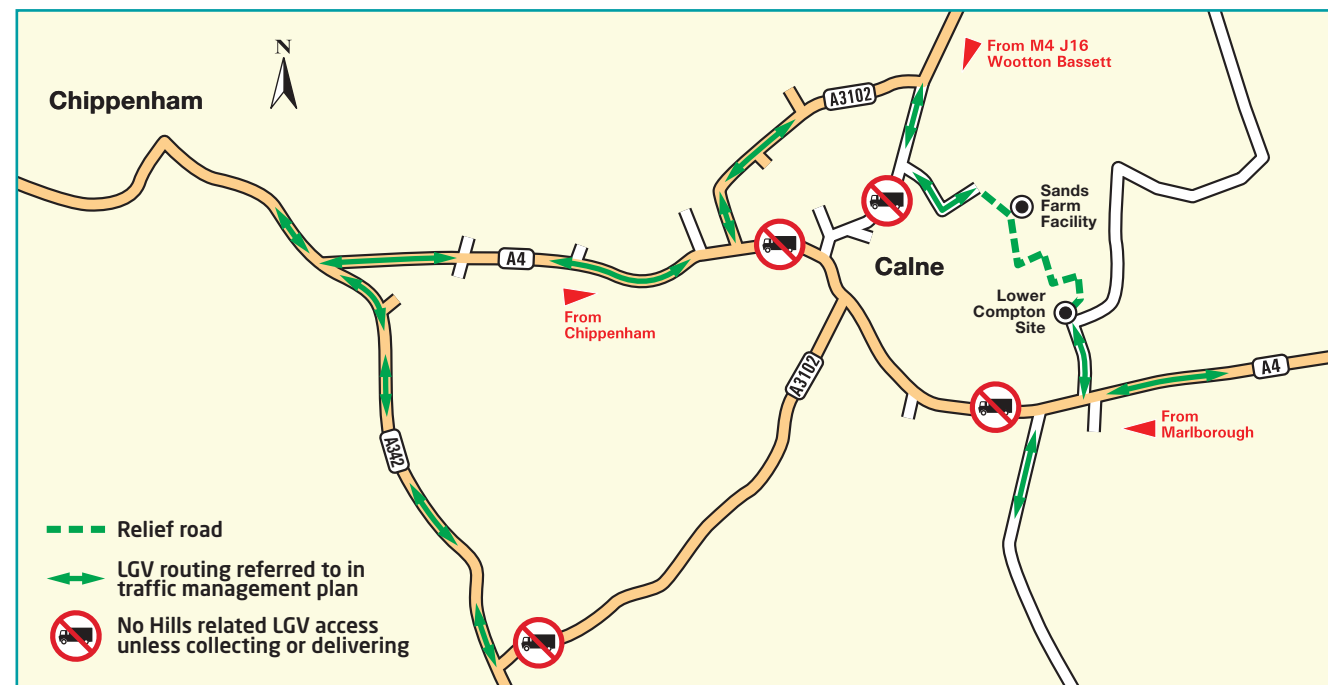
As part of the planning process a comprehensive environmental assessment was conducted which included an ecological study of both the habitats and the wildlife of the proposed road route. A small population of Great Crested Newts was found and as part of ecological mitigation works, trained ecologists trapped and carefully moved the amphibians and common reptiles like Grass Snakes and Slow Worms to new suitable habitats away from construction areas.

Traffic management plan

Engineering work on the relief road will continue through the summer and will include the installation of two weighbridges and ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) cameras at

both site entrances. On completion of the road a traffic management plan will be implemented – with the aim of diverting LGV site traffic from the need to travel on the A4 through the centre of Calne (as shown on the map below), unless Hills' vehicles are servicing customers in Calne Town or passing through the town and not visiting either site. LGV site traffic from the North and West will access the sites via the A3102, Sandpit Road entrance and site traffic from the South and East will enter via the main Lower Compton entrance.

The internal LGV relief road will not be open to the public or for Hills' employees to travel from Lower Compton to the Sands Farm Facility.



Sands Farm - Materials Recycling Facility (MRF)

Planning permission was also granted in August 2018 to convert the former concrete products factory, known as the Sands Farm facility, into a new advanced MRF to sort and process the comingled recycling collections made by Municipal Collections as part of the Wiltshire Council waste contract. The new MRF (see CGI above) will occupy approximately two thirds of the 80,000 square feet of the Sands Farm building, with the remaining space taken up with other commercial operations including a vehicle workshop, plus offices and employee welfare facilities. The existing MRF at Lower Compton will be used as a transfer site for municipal solid waste and green waste.

As recycling manager Henry Newbery explains: "The new plant will process approximately 20 tonnes of comingled recyclables per hour, which will be sorted in a single pass into 10 separate products for recycling."

"The plant has been designed to achieve a high quality standard in all the products it produces – in excess of 98%

purity. All material being processed through the plant will be loaded into a bag splitter that will open any bags and loosen all material before feeding onto the sorting line. All material will be passed through a quality control picking station to ensure material feeding into the plant is suitable.

"The material will then be split into paper and cardboard, plastics, cans and cartons using a series of screens. Paper and cardboard will be sorted further into three separate grades using a combination of screens, optical separators and quality control picking stations.

"The plastics, cans and cartons will also be separated into recyclable products through screens, optical separators, magnets, eddy current separators and further quality control picking stations. The final products will drop into gated storage bunkers. A central pit conveyor will move all materials from the storage bunkers to the baler."

Look out for updates on developments at the Sands Farm Facility and the Lower Compton site in future issues of intouch.

Timeline - key stages



Mike Hill elected to ESA board

The Hills Group chief executive Mike Hill has been elected on to the board of the Environmental Services Association (ESA) - the trade body representing the UK's resource and waste management industry.



As Jacob Hayler, executive director of the ESA explains: "The ESA board sets the strategic direction for the Association and ensures that the ESA is working effectively to promote its members' interests. The board consists of chief executives and managing directors of waste operators and I am delighted to welcome Mike Hill on to the board to represent mid-sized, regional members."

Mike Hill commented: "I'm excited to have been elected on to the ESA board, and I hope I can make a positive difference in the role during what promises to be an interesting and challenging time for the waste industry."

Find out more about the work of the ESA at www.esauk.org



Jacob Hayler, executive director of the ESA welcomes Mike Hill on to the board.

Memory of Robert Hill lives on in Junior Golf award

Thirteen year old golfer Oscar Oliver has won the Robert Hill Junior of the Year award - a trophy given in memory of the former Hills chairman and president of Marlborough Golf Club, Robert Hill.

The Robert Hill award is open to boys and girls and acknowledges individuals' performance and improvement as well as their contribution and conduct off the course. In the past year Oscar has reduced his handicap from 21 to 9 and finished top of the county under 14s nett order of merit.

Robert's widow Rosie presented Oscar with his trophy and a £100 prize at Marlborough Golf Club's presentation evening and commented: "Robert was a great supporter of junior golf in Wiltshire and he would be delighted that the trophy given in his name has been won by such a dedicated, talented and polite young man."



Oscar Oliver receives The Robert Hill Junior of the Year award from Rosie Hill.

Community Foundations



Pictured L-R: Neil Watts, transport co-ordinator Quarry Products (and Swindon Town super fan), Toby Spearing, site manager S&C Slatter, Andy Shield, sales consultant Quarry Products and Jon Holloway, Head of Foundation at Swindon Town FC Community Foundation (STFCCF).

Quarry Products recently supplied 5,500 tonnes of Primary Type 3 aggregate to the construction of the full size artificial turf pitch at Swindon Town FC Community Foundation's £2.4million club hub facility.

The aggregate was supplied via Hills' Rail Depot at Royal Wootton Bassett to the on-site contractor S&C Slatter which specialises in the design and installation of sports facilities. The volume of aggregate equated to 2.5 train loads.

Andy Shield, sales consultant Quarry Products, said: "We have been privileged to work with S&C Slatter to deliver aggregate for such an important project in Swindon. Special thanks go to Neil Watts and the team at the Rail Depot for enabling specific amounts to be delivered on certain days in a particular timescale."

Steve Ayres, FA Framework Manager at S&C Slatter, commented: "The ability of Hills to respond quickly and deliver our requirements to plan was impressive and key."

Jon Holloway, Head of STFCCF, added: "It is so exciting to see this facility being constructed after many years in the planning; so much so we were clapping with pleasure to the Hills' vehicles each time they delivered the aggregate."

Shorncote Quarry

Phase 2B

Phase 2A

Conveyor

Phase 1B

Phase 1A



Archaeology surveying has taken place in Phase 1 with no significant findings.



Soil is being excavated using a loading shovel to reveal the mineral deposit underneath.



Excavated soil is used to create a bank, known as a 'bund', which helps to screen the quarry from the local community. The soil will be re-used in the restoration of the site.

Go ahead granted for Shorncote Quarry extension

Planning permission was recently granted for the extraction of approximately one million tonnes of sand and gravel from a site adjacent to Quarry Products' Shorncote Quarry.

The mineral will be extracted from 19 hectares of land, ahead of the residential redevelopment of the former Cotswold Community complex near Ashton Keynes and the construction of over 100 new homes.

The extraction will take place in two phases over a two year period. Quarry Products is anticipating it will start in May in Phase 1A then 1B before moving into Phases 2A and 2B as shown above. Work is currently underway to install a ground conveyor to take the aggregate directly

from the extraction area to Shorncote Quarry, where it will be processed and stockpiled ready for collection.

In the necessary surveys which take place before any mineral extraction, it has been noted there are archaeological features present in the site, mainly within Phases 2A and 2B of extraction. These features will be exposed when the soils are removed and mapping and sampling will be carried out by archaeologists to ensure that a suitable historic record is made.

Once the extraction is complete, two landscaped lakes and a pasture field will be created for the enjoyment of future residents of the new community development.

Peter Andrew, Group director Quarry Products commented: "We are pleased to be a part of this development project where the restoration sits within Hills' legacy to successfully restore areas after mineral extraction to encourage an increase of biodiversity both on land and water."

The Cotswold Community site is located within the Cotswold Water Park where Hills has extracted aggregates for 100 years and its successful restoration of quarried land has won numerous industry awards.

"Securing planning permission has given us a great opportunity to extract the aggregate and use our existing facilities at Shorncote so conveniently."

Peter Andrew, Group director Quarry Products

Creature Comforts

Homes works closely with ecologists to rehome species on its sites

Before a planning application is submitted by Homes, one of the many surveys conducted is to assess the flora and fauna present on the site. Ecologists suggest actions to be carried out by Homes to limit, stop or reverse the effects that a proposed development may have on any present species.

What is the process?

- 1 Ecologists conduct a 'desk study' looking at aerial view imagery and previously documented information of the site and the surrounding kilometre of land.
- 2 If protected species (such as wild birds, bats, badgers, reptiles etc) possibly inhabit the land, the ecologist does a 'walk over' survey to look for the species' locations, quantities and habitats.
- 3 Actions to avoid any disruption to animals before, during and after construction and the methods to provide homes for animals away from the construction zone are agreed with the local planning authority.
- 4 Due to species' seasonal activity, all surveys and remediation work must be carried out at certain times of the year.
- 5 After a planning application is approved and before construction, some protected species can be encouraged away from the construction zone and others are hand cleared by a licenced specialist.



© Darin Smith, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.

Hilperton's Badgers

During Homes' planning application for 15 houses on what will become Centenary Close, a nearby ecological survey identified an active badger sett which had implications for the Homes' development.

Natural England has strict distances for protection zones from construction areas to badger setts. Homes changed the layout of its proposed development to accommodate this protection zone.

Andrea Andrews, development manager Homes, said: "Homes has erected a temporary fence to give some protection to the badger sett. The noise of construction work will discourage the badgers from entering the building site, but any deep excavations on site have ramps to aid a badger's escape and all large pipework is checked before it is handled."

"We work closely with ecologists to enhance the environments in which we are developing. It is important to us that we are creating developments with suitable provisions for local species." Andrea Andrews, development manager Homes

Providing homes for birds

Homes is often required to install bird boxes to encourage nesting away from, and sometimes within, its developments.

These can be traditional wooden bird boxes positioned in trees outside the construction zone, for example in a hedgerow boundary at High Penn Park in Calne. Sometimes bird boxes are required to be installed on houses within a development. Ecologists advise on suitable locations and to ensure the boxes are aesthetically discreet, Homes often use brick bird boxes as shown below.

A Blue Tit using a brick bird box which isn't fully mortared in, allowing the front to be removed for maintenance if required. Copyright - birdbrickhouses.co.uk



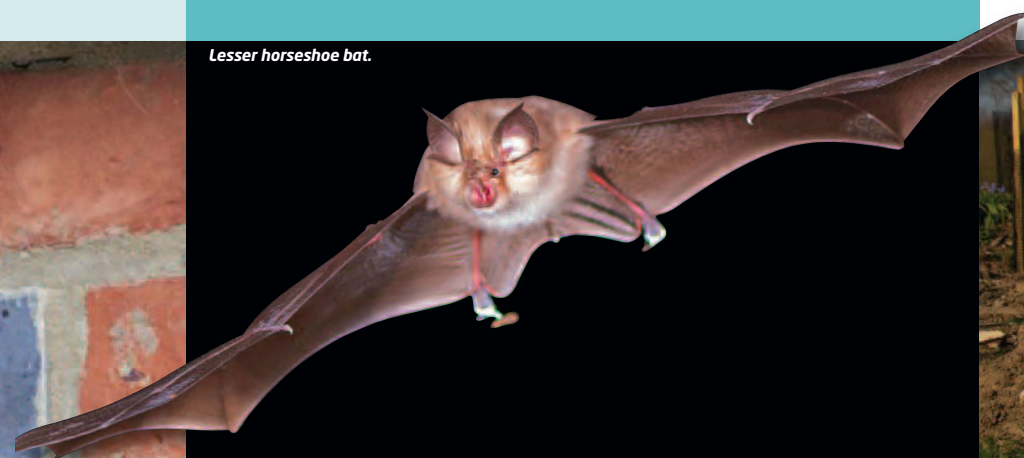
Housing bats

Bat boxes have been installed at High Penn Park in a hedgerow boundary because bats are likely to use the hedge as a commuting route and feeding area.

Six bat boxes are located on mature trees, placed at five metres in height and orientated in different directions to provide a range of temperature gradients.

The species of bats most likely to be seen in Wiltshire are Great and Lesser Horseshoe and Pipistrelle.

Lesser horseshoe bat.



Rehoming reptiles

At Stembridge Close in Burghclere, Homes was asked to build a pond and a hibernaculum made up of bricks and logs covered with soil and vegetation, to provide a place for reptiles to seek refuge and hibernate.

A licenced specialist moved 41 slow worms, three palmate newts, two common toads, a common frog and a grass snake to the pond and hibernaculum over six weeks to ensure the area was clear before construction started.

Grass snake © ECOSA.



Male slow worm © ECOSA.



Example of a hibernaculum.



Dingbats is back...




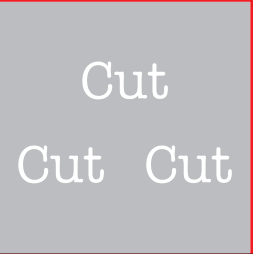





...but harder than before

WIN a £50

voucher to spend online or instore + runner-up prizes of two £25 M&S vouchers.

MARKS & SPENCER

The Dingbats competition in the last issue of intouch proved very popular and so it's back, but this time it's a little bit harder, plus there are ten Dingbats to solve rather than eight.

 <p>(3, 2, 3, 3)</p>	 <p>(3, 4)</p>	 <p>(4, 1, 3)</p>	 <p>(1, 3, 5)</p>	 <p>(2, 6, 3)</p>
 <p>(5, 2, 6)</p>	 <p>(1, 8, 6)</p>	 <p>(3, 6, 3, 4)</p>	 <p>(16)</p>	 <p>(7, 7, 3, 5)</p>

Complete the ten Dingbats shown above, add your name and site location below, then scan and email your entry to info@hills-group.co.uk. Alternatively send this page via the internal post to the communications department at Wiltshire House, County Park, Swindon. **Entries must be received by Friday 26 July.**

Name:

Location:

Get your photo in the 2020 Hills calendar

We need employees' photos to make Hills' 2020 calendar extra special. Do you have any photographs of the beautiful part of the world we live in - flora, fauna, landscapes or architecture?

It could be a breathtaking view, a sensational street scene or even a playful pet – the brief is a broad one. So look through your existing photos and get snapping before the print deadline of October 2019 and your photo could be gracing one of next year's calendar pages. Photographs must be your own, not the intellectual property of another person or organisation and should be 500Kb or larger.

Send your photos via email to info@hills-group.co.uk

