

NEWS RELEASE – 28 April 2023

The Hills Group and Cotswold Lakes Trust celebrate 25-year partnership



Pictured (left to right) Paul Hazel and Matthew Millett from Cotswold Lakes Trust with Peter Andrew from The Hills Group in a go-kart at Cotswold Country Park & Beach in the Cotswold Water Park.

They've been great partners for 25 years, and when it comes to The Hills Group and Cotswold Lakes Trust, it doesn't seem a day too long.

The partnership has helped protect Kingfishers, Otters, Water Voles and many more species in the Cotswold Water Park. And by working together on everything from reed beds to fossil hunts and footpaths, they have helped to create one of the most stunning wetland landscapes in the UK.

Now The Hills Group and Cotswold Lakes Trust are celebrating their partnership and a commitment to build on their achievements in the Cotswold Water Park, restoring and creating an exceptional leisure amenity and haven for wildlife.

Group Director of Hills Quarry Products, Peter Andrew wouldn't have it any other way.

“The Hills Group has been operating in the Cotswold Water Park for more than 100 years and has created many of the lakes and wonderful habitats you see today. We are proud to support Cotswold Lakes Trust and all they do for wildlife and the environment. They’re a great charity and we work extremely well together,” he said.

The Cotswold Water Park is a network of more than 180 lakes across 42 square miles which emerged from decades of intensive gravel extraction and restoration. It is now a unique wetland landscape.

The lakes are home to an amazing variety of wildlife and a host of leisure activities for its 20,000 residents and one million annual visitors. In 2021, it was recognised nationally as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Cotswold Lakes Trust’s Executive Chairman Paul Hazel praised Hills for the pivotal role the company has played in creating the Cotswold Water Park since its first gravel pit was dug a century ago.

“Their long-term commitment to restoration has played a fundamental role in creating this fantastic leisure area and a haven for wildlife,” he said.

“Their generosity in providing more than £1.3m through the Landfill Communities Fund has enabled the Trust to help preserve the amazing biodiversity of habitats and species in the Cotswold Water Park and to carry out projects ranging from the creation of nature reserves to improving public access and managing country parks.”

Based in Down Ampney, Cotswold Lakes Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees (all volunteers) who oversee the work of a team of seven staff, assisted by loyal volunteers. It receives no core funding from central or local government and relies heavily on donations.

For more information on The Hills Group and Cotswold Lakes Trust partnership see <https://cotswoldlakestrust.org/resources-documents/>

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Notes to editors

About The Hills Group:

Established in 1900 The Hills Group Limited is a privately owned family company with a broad and successful portfolio of business activities which include recycling and waste management; quarrying of aggregates and production of ready-mixed concrete; and building new homes. It is a dynamic regional business which, while centred on Wiltshire, has stretched its boundaries into neighbouring areas.

www.hills-group.co.uk

About Cotswold Lakes Trust:

- Cotswold Lakes Trust is a fully registered charity (no 1120518) dedicated to the conservation and enhancement of the Cotswold Water Park for the benefit of wildlife and people.
- Cotswold Lakes Trust aims to be the focal point for the protection and improvement of the rich natural environment of the Cotswold Water Park and for any discussion concerning the future development of leisure and recreation facilities and public access.
- It manages hundreds of acres of land within the Cotswold Water Park, from Neigh Bridge Country Park near Somerford Keynes to Riverside Park in Lechlade, and encourages the public to responsibly access the sites for recreational purposes, ensuring that the importance of these sites for wildlife is conserved and enhanced.



- It aims to engage with visitors, the local community, schools and universities to promote a greater understanding and appreciation of the heritage, wildlife and landscape of the Cotswold Water Park – migratory bird-life, fossil finds in the sedimentary sand and gravel, precious wildflower meadows and the Cotswold Water Park's bio-diversity.
- Cotswold Lakes Trust has no core central or local government funding. It works with donors, charitable funds, individuals, companies and its members to ensure that the Cotswold Water Park is used and cared for in ways which will maintain it for future generations.
- It is based at Cotswold House, Manor Farm, Down Ampney, Cirencester GL7 5QF
- www.cotswoldlakestrust.org

About Cotswold Water Park:

- Cotswold Water Park is a network of more than 180 lakes in an area of 42 square miles, stretching roughly from South Cerney in the north, Somerford Keynes in the west, Cricklade in the south and Lechlade in the east.
- It has become a unique wetland landscape created after 60 years of intensive gravel extraction.
- The lakes offer a huge diversity of habitats for birds, mammals, fish and insects, plus extensive leisure opportunities for its 20,000 residents and one million annual visitors.
- In 2021 it was recognised nationally as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.
- The Park straddles three counties (Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Oxfordshire) and four local authorities.
- Within it are several environmental charities and many commercial organisations including corporate, small and medium-sized businesses. None but Cotswold Lakes Trust are dedicated to the Cotswold Water Park alone.
- <https://waterpark.org/>