

Welcome to our 2016 autumn newsletter. It has been an interesting year for the UK and life at Hills is never dull, as you can see from the many and varied projects showcased within. We have a new website, with more pictures, case studies and a simplified layout. Our blog is regularly updated with news and appointments. Do have a look: www.wthills.com

The impact of the Brexit vote has not been as significant as many had predicted but we have a long way to go yet. In the south west we wait to see what impact the commitment to proceed with Hinkley Point C will have on the construction market and the availability of skilled trades and although we have a large amount of affordable housing on our books at the moment it would be good for all to see more government investment in this area.

Hills have had a busy year with a growth in turnover across all areas of the business and I know that the commitment and professionalism of our staff is a key factor in this growth. May I take this opportunity to thank all our clients, professional colleagues and other members of the industry for their continued support.

Philip Rumbelow

Success for Cornwall

The Penzance office has increased its workload substantially in the last year and is now working throughout the county on a variety of exciting projects. John Shingler recently joined the team from a housing association in the Midlands and will be working towards a Master's degree and then going on to Chartered status whilst taking over a share of the workload.

A considerable amount of affordable housing is still being built in Cornwall and we are undertaking many projects for Ocean Housing, Coastline Housing and Devon & Cornwall Housing varying in size from eight units in Lostwithiel to fifty-seven units in Bodmin. Hills are acting as Employer's Agent on Section 106 projects and Quantity Surveyors for the housing associations' own projects.

In St Austell Hills are supervising the construction of sixteen luxury apartments on two sites at Cliff House and Penolva. For the same developer we are about to complete 12 luxury apartments at Cordyline Croft, St Ives valued at £2 million. In Polzeath the piling works are commencing for a luxury house on the site of an old bungalow and at Perran Iron Foundry, around the listed foundry buildings, the second phase of an exciting development of riverside houses and apartments is on site.

New Look Expands

The fashion retailer has opened 14 new womenswear stores this year and Hills assisted with 10 of them. We acted as Project Managers, Cost Consultants and Principal Designers on all stores bringing them in on budget and opening to programme. Hills are currently appointed on nine new stores for the first half of next year.



Men Only

After successful trials in its flagship store on Oxford Street, Central London, and at other key locations, New Look have opened 14 new stand-alone Men's stores designed with a real masculine feel. Investment from the South African tycoon Christo Wiese will help the fashion retailer increase its pace of expansion. Hills have been assisting New Look with the feasibility costing of the new Men's stores.

Hills' services for the Construction Industry

We welcome enquiries for any of the services we offer as listed below:-

- Cost Consultancy
- Quantity Surveying
- Contract Administration
- Project Management
- CDM Advisor
- Principal Designer
- Party Wall Advice
- Arbitration
- Dispute Resolution
- Expert Witness
- Builders' Quantities

Managing Director, Philip Rumbelow is always happy to discuss your specific requirements. Contact him on:
Tel: 01392 218010
Email: philip.rumbelow@wthills.com.

Social Housing

Although funding is limited, Housing Associations continue to develop.

Hills are working with Spectrum in Plymouth on a joint venture with Kier; in Exminster, Clyst St George and Plymouth with Devon and Cornwall Housing; in Dawlish with Cornerstone on affordable rent and shared ownership houses and in Dorset with Yarlington and Spectrum.

Meanwhile staff in the Milton Keynes office are having preliminary meetings with Grand Union Housing Group on two new sites, one of which will be a joint venture scheme with a local developer to provide social housing under a Section 106 Agreement where Employer's Agent services will be provided, and private housing to the remainder where Project Monitoring services will be provided.



Colourful Science Block

Work was completed over the summer holiday on the refurbishment of four laboratories as Phase 1 of Mounts Bay Academy's Science Block refurbishment. The remaining three rooms were ready for occupation after half-term.

A student focus group working in conjunction with academy staff was integral in the initial design and specification of the laboratories. The results will provide seven bright, open and colourfully accessorised modern spaces which will make learning science a very positive experience. The school are making them even more exciting by adding themed wall graphics to finish the environments to the highest standard.

CIF funding has been accessed to enable the entire science block to be fully refurbished from the top down, including new roofs, ceilings, walls, doors, floor coverings, furniture and science equipment.

Hills assisted the Academy with the initial CIF bids and have provided full project management and quantity surveying services for the scheme.



Views over the Dart

Robin Hart has worked as quantity surveyor with architect Stan Bolt on a number of projects and they are currently collaborating on the construction of a new house for a private client in Dartmouth.

The Garden Plot, a two-storey detached house clad in stone with render and glazing, will eventually have views down over the town to the River Dart and Kingswear.

The contractor's first task is to dig into a substantial bank to create a new access to the site, which was originally the tennis court of Woodford House, as there is a significant difference in level between the plot and the adjacent road.

Advanced Engineering Training

Bridgwater College is in the forefront of providing its students with 'Live' training environments for engineering and civil engineering. These training areas have been set up to fully replicate the workplace, enabling learners to see and understand workplace safety, cultures and behaviours alongside job-related skills, so that they leave College fully understanding the expectations of the world of work. So successful has the College been that Rolls Royce sends its apprentices to the College for training.

The new £5.7 million Advanced Engineering Centre will be a striking steel framed building set off by a sloping glazed frontage in blue glass. Procured via a two-stage tender using the Southern Construction Framework, the construction work commenced on site in September for completion within a year. The building will contain four training workshops and 13 classrooms for Computer Aided Design focused training and general teaching, with associated cafeteria, changing spaces for students and staff accommodation.

Nuclear Training

Following the Government's announcement that Hinkley Point C will go ahead, it is expected that the nuclear industry will need 30,000 new employees over the next decade. Bridgwater College aims to create the workforce of tomorrow by delivering high-level technical training to over 7,000 learners by 2020.

The Government's flagship National College for Nuclear (South) will provide innovative technology and virtual reality simulators which will revolutionise the way in which higher level professional and technical training for nuclear new build, operation and decommissioning is delivered. Working closely with EDF Energy the College will have access to work experience, apprenticeships and employment opportunities within the industry.

Hills have been involved with this project since its inception and are currently negotiating a two-stage tender which will see the building opening in late 2017. The £9.3 million project will provide a zinc and copper clad teaching block with big spans to provide large open spaces within the building. The welfare block which is accessed by a high level glazed bridge will contain a café, a gym and space for social gatherings.

Contemporary Feel

The new Bond Street riverside development, which lies in the heart of Chelmsford City Centre, has recently opened, creating a contemporary and fresh environment with riverside leisure facilities.

The Debenhams store backs on to the new development and, it too, has had a complete internal refit and new external feature cladding with full height glazed shopfronts to the rear elevation adjacent to the new development.

Hills have acted as quantity surveyors for the project which will be completed in time for Christmas.

Customer Care

Hills are project managing the stripping out and remodelling of customer toilets in three Debenhams' stores on the south coast. Works will provide new male and female facilities including disabled access and family rooms.



Academies Are 'Performing' Well

Work commenced in July on Plympton Academy's new Performing Arts Centre. The scheme involves the construction of an auditorium with a stage and fold back seating which is tiered to a gallery area above. In addition there will be classrooms and teaching spaces for music, including a drum room which has triple glazing!

Uffculme Academy have successfully secured over £2 million from the Education Funding Agency to create a 400 seat Theatre, Drama Studio and a large foyer accessed through double doors which will act as an extension to the existing dining facilities or as a theatre reception area. There will be a stage and fold back seating with the drama classrooms under the rear of the seating.

The works were procured successfully through a two-stage tender and works are now on site. Hills assisted with the initial funding application and are now providing full project management and quantity surveying services on the scheme.

In addition, the school also received funding to carry out much needed improvements to the school's road access.

During the school holidays the road was widened to allow two-way traffic flow in and out of the school thus improving traffic movement and providing a much safer environment for all.

Welcome to Hills

Craig Simpson joined Hills' Milton Keynes office in July this year as a senior quantity surveyor and CDM Advisor. Craig is no stranger to Hills because as a self-employed quantity surveyor he has spent the last five years working on a freelance basis for the company.

Craig is a Member of the Association for Project Safety, a leading professional institution in the field of construction health and safety risk management.

As a father of two children, one at primary school and one at secondary school, he lives in Northamptonshire and spends his leisure time playing guitar in a band and enjoying his hobby of photography.

We also welcome Levi Chima who has joined the Croydon office as an Apprentice and John Shingler who joined the Penzance Office as a trainee QS.

Is this a trend?

Twenty years ago it was redundant hospitals and mental institutions. Now it could be police stations! As the emergency services rationalise and relocate to new purpose-built offices, old police stations are becoming available for development.



This year Hills have been involved with the redevelopment of Poole police station into 52 apartments funded by Close Brothers and now we are monitoring the redevelopment of Buckingham police station for United Trust Bank. The bank is providing the finance for the refurbishment of the building into five residential units with a new-build block of ten flats in the car park. The Grade II listed Victorian building was no longer fit for purpose and had been unoccupied since 2012. It will be sympathetically redeveloped to preserve many of the building's original features, providing stunning new apartments designed for modern living with the added character and charm of their historic heritage. In both buildings the developers have retained the police logos as well as blue lights at the entrance.

Farm Machinery Specialist

Founded over 100 years ago and run today by the fifth generation of the Halse family, Halse of Honiton specialise in Farm Machinery and Implements. Having sold them they are then able to offer farmers and contractors spares and service from their depot in the centre of Honiton (not the best place to access with large machinery).

By the end of the year however they will be rebranding as Halse South West and moving their business to a new purpose built office and service centre at Daisymount, just off the A30 between Honiton and Exeter.

Hills have been working with Halse on this project from inception and it is on schedule to complete by the end of the year.

A large unit, which will be attractively faced in timber and glass with rendered panels, will contain workshops for maintaining tractors and large machinery with welding bays and a crane to lift engines which will be able to run the full length of the building. In addition there will be office space, service counters and stores.



A line of separate units will provide additional storage facilities.

Positioned in a wooded valley close to the dual carriageway the 270m long site will hardly be visible from the road. Attenuation ponds will be used to manage storm water runoff.



Another trend?

McMullen & Sons have been well-known brewers in Hertford since 1827. In 2006 they opened The Whole Hop Brewery, a new state-of-the-art brewery where they now carry out all their brewing operations.

The four acre site they vacated was sold to J Sainsbury for a new store and the listed Victorian brewery building has now been purchased for redevelopment. Close Brothers are funding the work to develop seven high-spec residential apartments in the building whilst keeping many of the old features. This includes a 15ft x 12ft brewing vat which will be converted into an ensuite dressing room for one of the master bedrooms!



Hills were also involved last year with monitoring work at The Maltings in Ware for the same developer, White Hart Developments.

Old Tannery

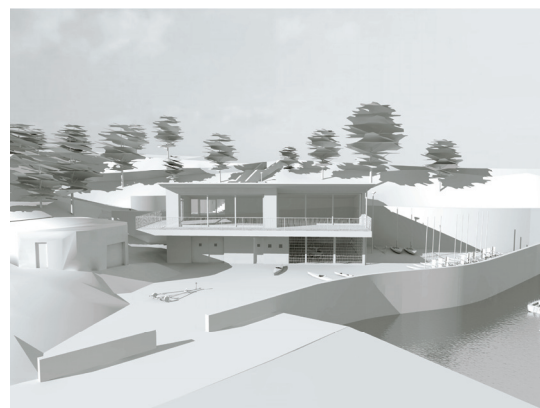
Refurbishment and an extension is being carried out to old tannery buildings in Canterbury to provide seven townhouses and 17 apartments.

The works commenced in April this year and are due to complete in May 2017. Hills are monitoring surveyors for the project which is funded by Close Brothers.



Community Facility

A new watersports centre is proposed for Larkstone Cove in Ilfracombe. The site is set at the mouth of a backfilled and culverted river valley in the shadow of Damien Hirst's Verity across the harbour. The new centre will provide a multi-purpose community facility with improved conditions for local water groups such as Y-Sail, Ilfracombe Gig Club and Ilfracombe Canoe Club. The design includes boat storage facilities, showers, changing rooms, a café open to the general public and a new slipway access to the water.



The site of the proposed centre requires significant re-profiling to enable a level developable platform to be constructed. The new development will also see the extension of the existing harbour wall across the beach with construction of new maritime structures. Hills are assisting North Devon District Council with their funding applications and procurement on this exciting scheme.

Fire blazes at Primary School

In September 2015 firefighters battled into the night to contain a blaze that raged at a Victorian primary school in north-west London for six hours. 540 pupils and 65 staff were safely evacuated from the school as soon as the fire alarm sounded just after 3pm.

The school put in place its business continuity plan to ensure that the childrens' education was not affected. St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School in Harlesden is owned by Westminster Diocese who had to relocate all the nursery and primary school children to other schools while temporary buildings were erected in the playground.

Tenders have been received for the reconstruction of the school valued at £5 million and Hills, who have a long-standing relationship with Westminster Diocese, are acting as quantity surveyors for the reconstruction of the three storey London based school. All that remains of it are the four walls and floors and it has not yet been decided whether to leave or replace the floors.

Party Walls?

Mamhead Slipway in Exmouth is being rebuilt. The principal elements of the project include demolition of the existing slipway, construction of a new longer and wider realigned slipway, trailer turning area, retaining wall and flood wall with flood gates and a kerb realignment.

Work started this Spring to avoid impacting on the migrating birds which arrive from the Arctic regions to spend the winter on the River Exe before returning north in the Spring.

Because of the vital role that the estuary plays in the survival of these bird species it is designated as a Special Protection Area, which limits activities which could affect their survival. The Marine Licence given by the Marine Management Organisation also requires that the piling work does not impact on migrating fish.

Hills acted for the Adjoining Owner on the Party Wall Agreement that was required before work commenced and are monitoring the effect of the works on the neighbouring buildings.



Georgian Mansion returned to former glory

A decaying Grade II listed Georgian mansion that was little more than a charred, roofless, shell will soon become 33 luxurious apartments. In addition, barn conversions will create 28 new executive homes in the grounds.

After a devastating fire Sandhill Park had been shrouded in plastic sheeting for three years until local developers Strongvox and Devington Homes acquired the building near Taunton and started to bring it to life again.

Hills are acting as monitoring surveyors on behalf of United Trust Bank who are funding the redevelopment. The fire destroyed the original roof which has now been rebuilt. The ornate detail in the leadwork is a pleasure to see. The original residents of the roof – Greater Horseshoe and Pipistrelle bats – have been relocated to an old pump house by the lake and given purpose built bat roosts.

Historic England are insisting on the developers keeping single glazing in the tall sash windows and quirky details such as decidedly wonky window ledges. Even the ornate rococo plasterwork is being replicated on the historic ceilings.

Interest in the luxuriously appointed apartments is already high and residents will enjoy a stunning location with views over the Quantocks and Blackdown Hills.

Relocation, Relocation

Not many people are asked to relocate and know that their partner will also have a job waiting in their new destination, but this is what happened to Phil Brown and his wife. As Kelly took up a promotion and transfer to Devon & Cornwall Police in Exeter as a Scenes of Crime Officer, Phil was able to relocate from his job in Hills' Milton Keynes' office and move into the Exeter office.

As Phil was already working closely with Geoff Hanna in the Dispute Resolution team this was a timely move and together they are able to offer a complete service to clients.

Our congratulations to Phil who has recently passed the exams to become a fully-fledged Associate Member of the Institute of Arbitrators.

With an increasing number of projects going to litigation the team are busy and in recent months have also been involved in insurance claims, working on behalf of the loss adjusters.

Safety Monitoring

Hills have been offering health and safety advice, auditing and acting as CDM Advisor over the last two years for the fitting out of commercial developments in London.

Tetris-blau are a design and build fitting out contractor who find property for clients, negotiate the lease with the landlord and then design and install the new office fit-out. Hills are assisting on all health and safety aspects of their projects from reviewing the initial design, preparing health and safety documents for the contractor to start on site, audit inspections during the works, preparation of the Health & Safety Files and issuing them to the in-going tenants of the building. Projects vary in length from four weeks to six months and Phil Bass, our CDM Advisor, can have as many as 12 projects in progress at any one time.

Old Pilchard Factory

The Big Lottery Fund and local fundraising has enabled the people of Mousehole to restore an old pilchard factory which has lain derelict since the Second World War. Named the Solomon Browne Memorial Hall after the eight-man crew which died in the Penlee lifeboat tragedy of 1981, the hall will provide a multifunctional, accessible community space, which aims to help address issues such as rural isolation, loneliness, employability, independence and wellbeing in old age. It will also include space for Mousehole's Harbour Lights and fishing gear as well as a heritage centre. Hills have acted as quantity surveyors for the project.



Image courtesy of www.chrisyacoubian.com ©

Manor Farm Barns

Last year work commenced on an exclusive courtyard development in Greywell, near Hook in Hampshire which included the conversion of four barns and the construction of a new barn. Recorded as originating from the 17th century, the Grade II listed former threshing barns have been skilfully converted to create exceptional homes with a high specification contemporary finish but retaining all the prime period features with vaulted ceilings and exposed timbers. The light and spacious buildings are a stunning blend of old and new with exceptional views to the rear and a south easterly aspect towards the River Whitewater.

Hills are monitoring progress on the development on behalf of United Trust Bank who are funding the work.





Views over Camel Estuary

A site near Rock in a peaceful and rural position with wonderful views of the Camel Estuary, this property is many people's dream location. hartQS are again working with Stan Bolt on the construction of a private house. Designed mainly of stonework and glazing and set into the hillside for minimum impact on the environment, this project which is nearing completion will provide its owners with a stunning home.

News In Brief

- Work started in September to re-roof and replace windows in a number of buildings at Exmouth College. The £0.7 million project will be carried out during term time with the associated health and safety risks being minimised by the contractors.
- The main structure of a 63-bed extra care home on the edge of The Great Field in Poundbury in Dorset is underway.
- Brixington Church design is complete and tender documents are underway. An enabling works package will keep the planning permission live whilst fundraising continues.
- Work on converting the old Carlton Hotel on the seafront in Penzance into apartments has just started.
- hartQS are again working with architect David Sheppard on the Green House near Tiverton. The challenging sloping site will require piling to support the sustainable steel and timber building.

Banking Business

Hills' staff now cover a large portion of the country in order to monitor projects for a number of banking clients. The majority of the projects are residential, varying from single houses to developments of 30/40 houses and barn conversions. Director, Andrew Hill, estimates that Hills are currently monitoring 80 to 90 separate schemes over an area from Lincolnshire and East Anglia, through to the Cotswolds, the Midlands and Cheshire with the London office focusing on the south east of the country. Staff in the Exeter and Penzance offices travel throughout the south and southwest of England.



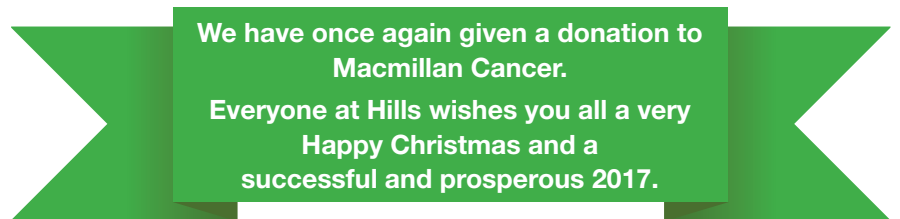
Let in the light

When architect, Louise Crossman, was looking for a quantity surveyor to work with her practice on various projects around Exmoor and North Devon a colleague recommended hartQS. Louise has extensive experience of the planning challenges associated with historic and listed buildings, and the specific requirements of working within National Parks and conservation areas.

Working as part of the team, hartQS are currently involved with initial costings and estimates on a number of projects which are mainly refurbishments of farmhouses with a variety of extensions.

Louise prides herself on "finding extra light and space which may not have been apparent" and demonstrates this with the use of a double-height glass extension with a moving glass wall on the gable end at Throat Farm; at Leigh Cottage, a central extension joining the existing farmhouse to an outbuilding which will be a mixture of glazing, timber and masonry housing the master bedroom and ensuite bathroom; and an extension on the end of the building at Oaklea House to form a new kitchen.

Elsewhere at Oldrey Farm budgets are being prepared for an orangery extension and at Kingswood Farm for major refurbishments.



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