

## Back to the Future

Pole House in Exeter, Hills' Head Office, has recently undergone a major upgrade prior to renewal of the lease for a further 20 years. This Grade II listed building has been restored to its former glory with a new roof, new windows, decorations and other external works.

Whilst looking to the future and the next 20 years ahead, the refurbishment has encouraged some reminiscing amongst staff and the realisation of Hills' stability within a changing industry.

Between them, the five directors have clocked up 135 years of continuous service for the Company. Paul Sowden has been with Hills for 36 years, Philip Rumbelow, 30 years, Andrew Hill, 28 years, Geoff Hanna, 22 years and Gary Pope, 19 years.

Among the staff, Chris Godden and Saroja Cattaree in Croydon office have clocked up 28 years. Associate Director, Jon Widgey has 16 years with the practice and Administration Manager, Alison Brooks has 20 year's service.

Long service does not lead to complacency however and Hills encourage staff at all levels to develop their skills, knowledge and qualifications through attendance at local RICS seminars, online learning, college courses, and through in-house training initiatives. A CPD programme has been developed for staff at all levels. Directors' training includes a strategy to develop the business in addition to their usual technical CPD.

Hills have always believed in training the surveyors of the future and currently have five members of staff working towards their Assessment of Professional Competence training as well as four trainees/apprentices in various company offices. Occasionally work experience is provided to youngsters to give them a broad view of the work available within the company.

Staff at Hills' four offices look forward to a positive future and the opportunity to provide a first class service to all their clients. We hope the information contained within this Newsletter will give you some idea of the range and quality of work.



## Government department to relocate

Hills are assisting Teignbridge District Council with an internal refurbishment and fit-out to part of their offices at Forde House in Newton Abbot. Staff from the Department for Work and Pensions will be relocating to one of the newly refurbished office areas once the work is complete.

The work is being undertaken within the 1980's extension to Old Forde House, a Grade I listed former Jacobean manor house.



## Hills' services for the Construction Industry

We are pleased to offer the following services:

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

Philip Rumbelow and his fellow Directors are always happy to discuss your specific requirements. Please see the back page for contact details.

## Dispute Resolution

Procuring a building should be a satisfying and rewarding process but if something goes wrong and you need advice or a legal representative, whether you are a client, a contractor or a sub-contractor, then Geoff Hanna and his team are here to help. Our aim is always to keep you out of court but if this is inevitable we will do everything we can to assist.  
geoff.hanna@wthills.com



## HartQS

Robin Hart joined Hills in 2014 when his company HartQS merged with Hills. He became a Managing Surveyor this year and continues to work closely with a number of eminent local architects.

Many of his projects are unique designs in stunning positions on Exmoor or by the sea in Dartmouth and Cornwall. They vary from small extensions to complete houses as well as work on a number of churches.

Green House is, as the name implies, a sustainable building with a green roof.



Teign Springs is the conversion of an agricultural barn into a modern house, using timber frame, timber shingles, polished concrete floors, extensive glazing and balconies.

At Throat Farm on Exmoor a cottage is being extended and renovated and a working space is being formed by placing a timber 'box' inside an open barn.

## H&M

Hills have involved with the refurbishment of 15 stores over the past year for H&M, working closely with Quadrant Design, as their CDM Advisor. Quadrant provide the Architectural Design directly to H&M.

## Future Quantity Surveyors

21 year-olds Alex Myles and Danny Green have joined Hills as Apprentice Quantity Surveyors. Alex, from Milton Keynes will attend college on a day release whilst Danny in Exeter will be studying a BSc Honours degree via distance learning. During their study time both will assist with estimates, writing reports and visiting sites to gain experience.

## Head Office Refurbishment

Hills are Project Managers, Cost Consultants and Principal Designers on the refurbishment of Bedford House, Debenhams' Taunton Support Centre, which houses 650 staff who mainly deal with customer calls, HR and finance.

The building now has a new staff cafeteria, upgraded toilets including showers, and new on-floor service centres. Contractors are currently on site replacing all the windows, redecorating the facades and internally laying new flooring and decorating throughout. A new, larger reception area was created. The project is due for completion in February 2018.



## Activity in North Devon

Hills had two projects on site this summer for repeat client, Torrridge District Council. A fire, probably caused by a disposable BBQ, at Northam Burrows Visitor Centre in May destroyed part of the building which housed the visitor area. Unfortunately the Centre was closed during a large part of the summer whilst building repair work was carried out although the toilets were available, but the busy summer programme of events continued. The Visitor Centre is now returned to its former glory acting as a hub for educational and recreational events for children and families.

Meanwhile in Bideford, plans to relocate the Council to one site to provide economies of scale is one step closer with the construction of Bank End House, a single storey, open plan office block housing 50/60 employees.

Hills are also acting as Quantity Surveyor for Torrridge District Council for the alteration and refurbishment works at Riverside House as well as the construction of a new business unit at Caddsdawn Business Park in Bideford.



## APC Coordinator

Pete Lightfoot who works out of the Milton Keynes office, became an Associate Director early this year. In his new role Pete will be co-ordinating with all the APC candidates within the company and ensuring that they are moving forward in their pursuit of becoming chartered surveyors, identifying if there is a need for differing work experiences and training needs. He will also be the APC supervisor for the candidates in the South East region. This will entail mentoring the candidates and signing off competencies when all parties believe they have been completed.

## Change at the Chapel

Hills are acting as Quantity Surveyors for Mounts Bay Trading who are converting St George's Chapel in Truro into nine units on three floors. The imposing Grade 2 Listed building, backing onto the Kenwyn River, was originally designed as a Methodist chapel and still retains many original features. Works commenced in April and are expected to complete in the new year.

## ...and at the Church

Newton Abbot Town Council have procured the former St Leonards Church in the town. The intention is to provide an accessible community space, celebrating the heritage of the town and its people.



In addition to the community facility the building will house council offices and the town museum. The new project will be called Newton's Place and Hills will act as Quantity Surveyors and Principal Designer on the work to transform the historically important landmark.

## Blue light gets green light

A pioneering new facility for emergency response services in Milton Keynes is being developed. The Blue Light Hub is the first of its kind in the country, combining two fire stations in Bletchley and Great Holm, as well as providing operational bases for Thames Valley Police and South Central Ambulance Service.

Buckinghamshire Milton Keynes Fire Authority wanted to appoint a local company to take on the role of Principal Designer to support the lead architect in the CDM duties. Hills won the competitive tender for the work and are currently working on the CDM aspects of the multi million pound project.



## Extra care and Dementia

63 flats for elderly people in Poundbury will be finished early in 2018 and a show flat is now open. Hills are acting for Yarlington Housing Group on this £9 million project which gives older people the opportunity to live independently but benefit from care and support teams on site 24/7.

A similar scheme for 54 units will be built in nearby Gillingham by Magna Housing and Hills have been appointed as Employer's Agent for that project. Dorset County Council are keen to see similar projects throughout their area.

The Royal British Legion home at Galanos House in Warwickshire was recently featured in a Channel 4 documentary exploring progressive approaches to the care of people living with dementia. A £2 million project to build ten additional bedrooms, treatment facilities and a day care unit is the subject of a planning application. Hills were involved with the original build and are assisting with the new project which should go on site in the spring.

## Blot on the landscape

The historic, grade two listed Tantons Hotel in Bideford was seriously damaged by a fire in 2011 and has been derelict ever since. It occupies an enviable position on the waterfront opposite the ancient bridge over the River Torridge. Work has commenced on phase 1, the conversion of the main hotel building into eight flats. The scheme has had to be revised a number of times to allow for Environmental Agency requirements in case of severe flooding. Further phases are planned to refurbish the annex and town house building that also formed part of the original hotel.



## Exciting times at Bridgwater

Bridgwater and Taunton Colleges merged in 2016 and since then have been working to create one organisation that provides students with access to the best staff, resources and facilities in the region. Bringing the two organisations together in this way ensures that students in the local communities continue to have access to excellence in teaching and learning, whilst also benefitting from greater choice across the educational and vocational options offered.



For many years Hills have worked with the College on a wide variety of projects and this year will see the completion of two major exciting and unique projects. The Advanced Engineering Centre opened for the new college year in September and in addition to 'live' training environments for engineering and civil engineering there will also be an aeronautics training area.



National College for Nuclear [South]

Work is due to finish at the end of this year on the £9.3 million National College for Nuclear which will train employees for the nuclear industry and, in particular, for the nearby Hinkley Point C. The 'Access to Nuclear Engineering and Science' course will give students the experience, skills and knowledge to pursue a career in the nuclear energy sector, with courses starting in January.

## Art in the River Teign valley

Set amongst the peace of a valley in Stoke-in-Teignhead the old ice cream factory that belonged to Rocombe Dairy is being converted into a stunning house. The owners will be carrying out the internal fit-out themselves and hope to move in before Christmas.

On the other side of the road design work has commenced for the conversion of the cowshed building to provide two dwellings with sufficient space for the client to display their artworks.

## Carbis Bay Hotel

Work continues in St Ives to expand the luxury Carbis Bay Hotel facilities. The total investment is in the region of £12 million. Eight 3&4 bed beach-front lodges are currently under construction along with a multi-use venue with a large entertainment space available for hire. There will also be a restaurant and kitchen, the Ocean Sports centre, retail outlets and six five-star one-bedroomed apartments and one 'super-suite' - a truly luxury hotel with a 25 acre Blue Flag beach.



## Affordable Housing

Hills are working as Employer's Agent for Grand Union Housing Group on three projects in Milton Keynes, Kettering and Gravenhurst. The project in Milton Keynes is within a Taylor Wimpey development and will provide flats to rent or for shared ownership.

Following on from the extra care project in Poundbury, Hills are now acting as Quantity Surveyors for 34 affordable houses in Bridgwater for Yarlington Housing Group.

Hills continue to act as Employer's Agent on a three-phase project for Cornerstone in Dawlish where Redrow are the developers.

A number of neighbourhoods in Cornwall are among the most deprived in England and Hills' Penzance office is working with Devon and Cornwall Housing, Coastline, Ocean and Sanctuary Housing to improve this situation. Under 106 Agreements Hills will act as Employer's Agent for a project of 33 houses in Camborne for Sanctuary. In Helston they will be Employer's Agent for Coastline who are building 75 houses.



## The Pheonix Rises

Since a dramatic fire destroyed St Joseph's, a Victorian era Roman Catholic primary school in North London, the 540 children and 65 staff have been accommodated in temporary buildings in the playground. The end is now in sight however when the £16 million rebuild of the school, which first opened in 1887, finishes in June 2018.

The shell of the building has been retained but structural alterations to the foundations were required and modern materials will replace the old. However the original layout and large classrooms will remain although a new boiler room will provide improved heating.

Hills have worked with the Diocese of Westminster over the last two years, liaising with insurers, to ensure that the school rises from the ashes once again.

Hills are working for the same client in Finchley to re-fenestrate, steam clean and re-clad the four storey building at Finchley Catholic High School. At the same time there will be a health and safety check and maintenance carried out on the concrete cladding of the tower blocks.

## Project Monitoring Services

Hills continue to monitor projects for a number of lending banks. As the market eases they are delighted to be working again with clients Arbutnot Latham, Secure Trust Bank and Lloyds and are carrying out more work for Close Brothers than ever before.



Projects include Park Crescent in Torquay, the conversion of a terrace of eight town houses in a crescent shape into apartments and an unusual barn conversion in Chipping Norton where the external stone structure remains and a modern eco-friendly timber frame structure with

a new roof is constructed inside it. This will provide five small 'lock and leave' low maintenance homes for city dwellers wanting a second home in the Cotswolds.

In Didcot, Hills are monitoring a mixed use project for Henry Davidson Developments. On another scheme in Leighton Buzzard the developer is building a three storey block of flats with a Sainsbury's Local store on the ground floor, and in Milton Keynes the same developer is building two blocks of flats, one block comprised entirely of flats and the other block comprising small works units on the ground floor and flats on the floors above.

## The Drama has finished

Plympton Academy's Performing Arts Centre and Uffculme Academy's Theatre and Drama Studio have both been completed enabling the schools to practise for and produce high quality shows and musical performances as well as enhancing their musical and drama syllabus.



Plympton Academy Performing Arts Centre

## Store takeover

Hills completed the New Look store in the Leeds Trinity Centre a few years ago. When British Homes Stores ceased trading and closed their stores New Look took over approximately 50% of the store which sits partly under the existing New Look store.

New Look will be extending into this unit, installing two escalators, a lift and opening up the shopfronts. This will extend the women's offer and introduce menswear to Leeds. The works, in two phases, will commence on site in January and are due to complete in April.

Hills will be Project Manager, Cost Consultant and Principal Designer for these works.

## Bake-off for charity

In September staff in the Exeter office joined together to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support as part of the World's Biggest Coffee Morning 2017. Several people displayed their baking skills so there was more than enough cake to go round. A total of £130 was raised.





## News in Brief

- Grace MacDowall has replaced Alison Armstrong as Accounts Manager. Alison has spent six years at Hills and is now moving away from the area.
- Works on Ilfracombe's Watersports Centre are planned to commence in 2018 when all the relevant licences for working on or near water will be in place. It will be home to the local dinghy, canoe and gig clubs.
- Christow School has received CIF funding to build a new Foundation Stage unit on the existing site. Hills are acting as Project Manager, Quantity Surveyor, and Principal Designer. Work is due to complete by February half-term.
- Hills are working for two clients on the same site in Carlyon Bay. Two blocks of flats are being built. Cliff House will have two penthouse suites with balconies overlooking the sea.
- Developer K D Homes is building 15 timber frame houses in Strawberry Lane on the outskirts of Lymington village. Ten will be affordable housing and five will be open market. Work started in October with Hills providing Quantity Surveyor services.
- Work has started on-site for a temporary Mother & Baby Unit at Wonford House, Exeter for which Hills are acting as Quantity Surveyor.
- Strong winds caused stonework to fall from the façade of The Elim Pentecostal Church in Rochester. Hills are working with their client to make the building safe and useable.

## New for Old

Hills are acting as monitoring surveyors for Hampshire Trust Bank on a project by developers, Acorn Blue, to build 13 apartments in the Old Station Master's House located on the waterfront in the heart of the small town of Fowey in South Cornwall. The majority of the thirteen one, two and three bedroom properties benefit from water views and all are a stone's throw from the picturesque Fowey River.



A survey of the site found that the bearing capacity of the ground was far poorer than anyone could have anticipated so it was decided to dismantle the existing building, pile and pour completely new foundations and then rebuild the building which had been taken apart piece by piece and labelled. The developers were keen to return the building to its former glory as it is much loved by the locals so the building envelope will be designed to modern day standards with the original Plymouth stonework dressing the façade. This will make the building more energy efficient, reduce the thickness of the walls and thus increase the interior areas.

Acorn Blue have a second project which Hills are monitoring on behalf of United Trust Bank. This scheme comprises the demolition of the Ponsmere Hotel at Perranporth Beach and the subsequent construction of 27 luxury apartments and 13 houses. The project is forecast to cost in the region of £8.3m and works are expected to be complete by May 2018.

Hills have given a donation to the British Heart Foundation this year in lieu of sending Christmas cards. Everyone at Hills wishes you all a very Happy Christmas and a successful and prosperous 2018.



[www.wthills.com](http://www.wthills.com)

### EXETER

Incorporating HartQS  
Pole House  
Old Ide Lane, Ide  
EXETER  
EX2 9RY  
Tel: 01392 218010  
E-mail: [exeter@wthills.com](mailto:exeter@wthills.com)

### LONDON

Woolwich House  
43 George Street  
CROYDON  
CR0 1LB  
Tel: 020 8681 7761  
E-mail: [london@wthills.com](mailto:london@wthills.com)

### MILTON KEYNES

Unit 4  
Lodge Farm Business Centre  
Castlethorpe  
MILTON KEYNES  
MK19 7ES  
Tel: 01908 634900  
E-mail: [miltonkeynes@wthills.com](mailto:miltonkeynes@wthills.com)

### PENZANCE

A Edwin Bryant + Associates  
No 1 The Old Smelting House  
Chyandour Place  
PENZANCE  
TR18 3LS  
Tel: 01736 361199  
E-mail: [penzance@edwinbryant.co.uk](mailto:penzance@edwinbryant.co.uk)