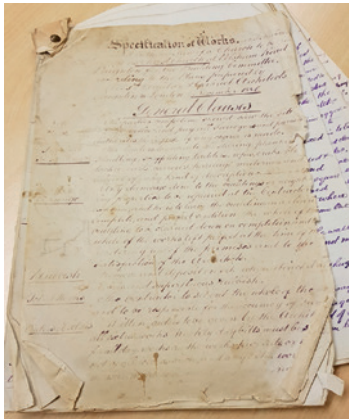


A celebration of 125 years

Hills are proud to be celebrating 125 years of serving the construction industry this year and are pleased to share with you some of the highlights showing the amazing variety of projects they have been involved with during that period. The profession of quantity surveyors has remained at the heart of the construction industry over the last one hundred years but our lives have been made easier by modern technology and our role has widened to include project management, CDM advice, dispute resolution and cost consultancy. The role of 'measurers' can be traced back to the period shortly after the Great Fire of London when the large scale rebuilding work gradually led to the adoption of quantities as a basis for tendering on large public building contracts.

Foundation through to 1914

When Vincent Brown, the founder of W T Hills & Co moved to Paignton in the mid 1880's and commenced the business he collaborated with two architects, one in London and one in Paignton, to work on the construction of a new church, Christ Church Paignton.



Handwritten specification for Christ Church, Paignton, held in our archives, left and the Church, right



The first edition of 'Spons' had been published in 1873



Torquay Pavilion Theatre was built in 1911 and 75 years later Hills again acted as quantity surveyors for the refurbishment of the theatre into a shopping and restaurant precinct as part of the nearby Marina development project.

Hills were appointed by Lloyds Bank for the construction of their building in Dartmouth in 1910. This was the first of many built or refurbished by Hills over the decades.



1905—First record of Hills acting as arbitrators in a dispute between a building owner and a contractor.

1915 – 1940

We have no records for the years of the First World War but it seems likely that the principal at the time, George Harris, who did not see military service probably due to his deafness, found enough work to keep the practice alive. In fact in the ten years after the war there was considerable growth which consolidated the firm's position as one of the leading practices in the West Country. In the early 1920s the staff comprised the two partners, a taker-off, two pupils and a general clerk/typist—all male. Salaries of assistant surveyors ranged from £225 to £400 per annum according to age and experience.

In 1920 William Thomas Hills (Billy) joined the practice. He was lively and friendly, a good mixer and a keen member of the Surveyors' Institution. This contrasted with George Harris who was quiet but a very able surveyor and an expert in construction.



In 1922 Billy Hills became a Professional Associate of the Surveyor's Institution. In 1923 he became a partner and the practice was renamed Harris & Hills.

1924 — First typewritten Bills in our possession, probably copied by the Gestetner process from wax stencils.

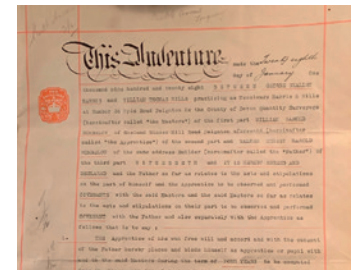
A Cost Book commencing in January 1925 lists jobs for a Baptist Church Institute, Devon Laundry, various Lloyds Bank premises, Paignton Urban District Council, Torquay Town Council, the Torbay Hotel and a large number of schemes for local architects. The Firm also prepared many fire loss claims and negotiated their settlement. Amongst the many land surveys carried out was one of the Dartington Estate shortly after its acquisition by the Elmhurst family.



July 1931: The practice of Harris & Hills was dissolved and W T Hills & Co. came into existence.

First RIBA Form of Contract published.

1927 — Harold Rumbelow joined Harris & Hills as an articulated pupil, receiving no salary during four year's apprenticeship.



During 1934 Hills had the interesting experience of working on a project designed by Edwin Lutyens — now the Drum Inn at Cockington, the only pub he designed.

1936 and 1937 saw steady expansion with three more pupils taken on. In 1938 they were formally allowed one day a week for study

1940 – 1950

With large amounts of work coming from the Ministry of Works on telephone exchanges and post office buildings and an increased workload from Torquay Town Council, Hills entered the period of the Second World War in good form. Quantity surveyors became a reserved occupation, although many of the staff joined up anyway and those that stayed at home often joined the Home Guard.



Bill Marsden, formerly architect at Torquay Town Council joined Percy Thomas, architects in Cardiff and as a result Hills were asked to work for him in Wales. This included swimming baths at the University College of Wales and new police courts and fire station for the City of Worcester which continued on site during the war.

1940 - The first lady comptometer operator was employed in the Norton Fitzwarren site office on a Supply Depot contract for the Ministry of Works.

Post war Hills worked on the expansion of four University Colleges in Wales, the first project was Pantycelyn Hall at Aberystwyth.



During the latter stages of the war the Government had discussions with ICI and Courtaulds with a view to establishing a plant to manufacture nylon yarn. A site was found in Pontypool, Wales for the new company, British Nylon Spinners Ltd, to build a factory. Hills were appointed as quantity surveyors and opened a site office with resident staff. In 1945 an office was opened in Cardiff and in 1947 the workload in Wales necessitated the establishment of an office in Swansea.



Death of Billy Hills in 1948 at the age of 54 leaving Harold Rumbelow as the sole partner.

After the war a rapid return to economic normality meant intense activity in the construction industry as the Government sought to re-establish industry and commerce.

The Estate Company converted ordnance factory units and constructed new units on green field sites called 'the advance factory programme'. Hills prepared standard Bills of Quantities for the



superstructure of various factories which were incorporated in contracts for individual sites.

Hills also worked on Ministry of Works prefabricated housing projects in 30/40 localities to provide accommodation for returning soldiers and their families.

Another source of work was War damage reinstatement and claims for compensation.

G S Harris and W T Hills merged resulting in four partners managing an increased workload.

1950 – 1960

The early 1950's was a period of consolidation and continuing steady expansion but not at the high pitch of 1945 and 1946. Work in Devon included the Princess Theatre in Torquay, the Festival Hall, Paignton, major extensions to the Imperial Hotel in Torquay and many projects for Lloyds Bank as well as hospitals and new schools projects. In 1956 they were involved in work to form study bedrooms (or cabins) at Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth.



In 1951 a staff pension scheme was established.



Hills and Percy Thomas continued to work together in Wales. One long term project covering many years was St Fagan's Castle, a 16th century fortified manor house, which was converted to establish the Welsh Folk Museum that illustrated Welsh life and culture through the centuries.

In 1953 Percy Thomas designed a new store for Lewis's in the centre of Bristol and Hills were appointed on the project, necessitating the opening of an office close to the site.

A standard library of Bill descriptions was prepared for use throughout the practice and cost planning was developed on all school and university projects to demonstrate public accountability.



In 1951 Hills were appointed for the civil works operations in the redevelopment of the Landarcy Oil Refinery in South Wales. Soon the need for larger tankers to deliver oil led to the development of Milford Haven as a new tanker terminal and pipeline and Hills were also involved in this project.

1955 Pupils were given a nominal salary, took correspondence courses and were allowed one day off a week for study.

1957 saw the start of a lengthy relationship with 3M Company. The first project was an extension to their plant in Gorseinon followed by work in the Midlands, South East and Scotland.

In 1958 Hills was appointed by English Electric Ltd for new transformer manufacturing facilities in Stafford.

During the boom years of nylon demand Hills returned to Pontypool for 'project 568' which involved extensive alterations and additions to British Nylon Spinners' factory.

1960 – 1970

In 1960 Hills opened a Midlands office to handle further work for English Electric and British Nylon Spinners expansion in Doncaster.

Leslie Drew joined Hills and became the first woman Chartered Quantity Surveyor in the firm.

Hills assisted main contractors, Sir Robert McAlpine, with re-measurement of the £10 million Spencer Works at Llanwern. At the time it was the largest civil engineering contract ever awarded to one firm in the UK.



In 1960 Hills were appointed for the new teaching hospital complex at Cardiff, the cost of which was expected to be £10 million. The whole project team were housed in adjoining offices which brought benefits to team working and rapid decision making.

Also in 1960 Hills were involved in the tendering process for a nuclear power generating station in Bombay, India. This was the first of a long succession of bids for similar projects with the same consortium over the next 12 years. In 1962 Bills were prepared for tendering on Wylfa Nuclear Power Station on the island of Anglesey and this successful tender was eventually constructed. This was followed by another at Dungeness.



1966 — First investigation into using computers as aid to producing Bills of Quantities.

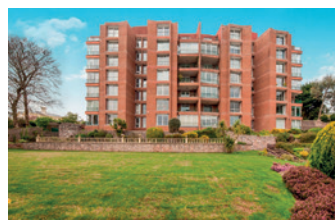
Hills were appointed by Torquay Town Council to work on the redevelopment of the Marine Spa. Due to the unfavourable economic situation only phase 1 was constructed which became Coral Island.

January 1968 saw metrication introduced for the construction industry.

In 1970 an office was opened in London.



Devon offices commenced work on a number of residential schemes for Housing Societies including Sorrento and Tenerife. Work continues on social housing to the present day.



1970 – 1980

Hills joined The Hospital Design Consortium and in 1971 they were awarded a commission for the district general hospital at Bangor.

In 1973 Harold Rumbelow retired from the partnership and Peter Rumbelow became a partner, continuing the family association with the firm.



1973 Computer aided Bills production first used on live projects although the economic viability was questioned.

The practice was involved with a number of contracts for International Stores. Over a period of almost 20 years the firm operated specially designed cost monitoring systems and contract administration for new and refitting of existing stores.

Work continued on a number of nuclear power stations including Heysham and Sizewell and the Shrewsbury office worked on the modernisation and reconstruction of the Brymbo Steelworks near Wrexham.



Development of the North Sea Oil Fields was expanding rapidly. 1973 saw Hills first involvement with Taywood Santa Fe on a measurement exercise for a proposed platform and were then appointed for the jacket fabrication contract for Thistle 'A' platform, the largest steel jacket ever planned. Hills staff supervised the fabrication and other contracts in Greythorpe, France, Spain and Norway.

In 1975 Hills International was formed and an office opened in Tehran with a rapid demand for commercial and oil and gas field development works. These included gas pipelines, pumping stations and work in oil terminals around the Gulf area. By the end of 1978, as a full scale revolution erupted, all the staff were evacuated.

At the same time work started on the North Cormorant oil production platform in the North Sea. As oil and gas operations expanded an office was opened in Aberdeen and oil and gas projects increased from 20% of turnover to 50% in 1982. Work included the Morecombe Bay gas field project, Nigg Bay oil terminal and Beatrice subsea pipeline.



1980 – 1990

The new Crown Office building at Cathays Park in Cardiff designed by Alex Gordon & Partners provided 41,000 sqm of office space with an underground car park and two central atriums. The construction was let in two stages and completed in 1980.

The RICS introduced the Test of Professional Competence (TPC) as final qualification for membership of the Institution.



1983 CATO system installed for preparation of Bills of Quantities.



In 1984 International Stores was taken over by the Dee Corporation and Hills were invited to provide services to their retail food chain, Gateway Foodmarkets Ltd., for new developments and fitting out of existing stores. A budget and control system was devised specifically for these projects and was used to prepare all preliminary budgets. Hills were also appointed for the construction of a new building in Bristol which became the head office for Gateway Supermarkets.



In 1986 Hills had their first commission for Burton Shop Development Division on an extensive store refurbishment programme including a major upgrade of Harvey Nichols in Knightsbridge. Hills continued to work with the de-merged group of Arcadia and Debenhams into the new century. Hills role expanded through the 1990s to include New Look, H & M, Littlewoods and many other smaller retail groups.

Hills were commissioned by Berni and Host Group (Grand Metropolitan) for a major refurbishment programme for Berni restaurants and hotels over a period of three years. Over 140 projects were controlled from the Torquay office. This was followed by the fitting out of high street premises for their Pastificio and Old Orleans restaurant chains.

In 1989 the partnership of W T Hills became a company incorporated with limited liability.



1990 – 2000

During the 1990's Hills undertook a number of high-profile projects for Forte Hotels prior to their acquisition by Granada in 1996. These included major refurbishments at the Waldorf Hotel, London; Imperial Hotel, Torquay; Hotel Eden, Rome; Hotel Phoenicia, Malta; Ritz Hotel, Madrid and Hotel Beach Plaza, Monte Carlo.

The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations came into force in 1994. Hills trained staff to take on the role of planning supervisor.



Hills were appointed by Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Healthcare Trust for an £8 million project to replace the original Orthopaedic Hospital built in 1927. The new wing included operating theatres, recovery wards, outpatients departments and offices/administration.

The Century Wharf residential development for Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd in Cardiff Bay commenced in 2000 and continued in six phases until 2009. 438 executive apartments, townhouses and penthouses were built with a total value of £95.5 million.



Paul Sowden became a director in 1996 and in 2021 he will celebrate 40 years with Hills.

The Millennium Stadium was originally built to host the 1999 Rugby World Cup. Compass Group appointed Hills for the catering fit out which included bars, food and beverage units, banqueting suites and a central kitchen. The 22 week project cost £4.8 million.

Peter Rumbelow retired in 2000 after 42 years with Hills.



In 1999 Devon County Council signed a PPP contract to move Kingsbridge Community College to one site with the rebuilding funded via the development of the lower school site for residential purposes. Hills were appointed project managers and quantity surveyors for the project and over the next two decades developed a Sixth Form Centre, English Block and two phases of Science accommodation.

2000 – 2010

In 2002 work started on the construction of Living Coasts, a marine aviary for Paignton Zoo on the Coral Island site (a Hills project of the early 1970's) on Torquay harbour. The £6.4 million coastal zoo contained exhibit areas, restaurant, shop, outdoor free-flying area and three aquarium tanks with a total capacity of 1,214 cubic metres.



Hills purchased March Project Management in 2002

In early 2000s Hills received their first Project Monitoring appointment on behalf of Close Brothers. This role has expanded and continues to this day with many of the specialists in the development funding market.

2003 Philip Rumbelow becomes the third generation of his family to become a director.

Hills were appointed on 3M's £26 million new build three storey office complex in Bracknell with restaurant, laboratories, gym, computer suites and auditorium linked by a central glazed atrium.



The Cancer and Genetics Building, University Hospital of Wales was a £4 million two storey building housing laboratories and offices constructed on pillars to maintain car parking underneath. The coloured louvres above the windows represent DNA strands.

In 2001 Hills launched their first website www.wthills.com



In 2008 Hills acted as Quantity Surveyor and Project Manager for the National Museums Northern Ireland on the £4.3 million fit out of new galleries in the Ulster Museum. Hills were able to draw on their considerable retail fit out experience for this project.



Hills took over the Cornish practice of A Edwin Bryant & Associates in 2007.

In 2005 a team from Hills won the Michelmores Challenge Cup in sailing boat Xcellent.

2010 – 2020

In 2013 the 'ugly duckling' of Oxford Street - Debenhams - was re-clad by owner's Land Securities with an aluminium cladding system comprising 185,000 suspended aluminium shingles that ripple gently in the wind. Hills acted as cost consultants for the interior works to provide an atrium, new signage, extended shop windows and the internal refurbishment of each floor.



Hills have worked at Bridgwater College over the last three decades as the campus has enlarged. Significant projects have been the Energy Skills Centre, Performing Arts Centre and most recently in 2019 the National College for Nuclear to provide state-of-the-art training facilities for the industry. The building houses a reactor simulator, computer-equipped training rooms and associated facilities.

Montgomery Primary School in Exeter is the first Zero Carbon Passivhaus School in Europe. It produces all its energy needs from an extensive photovoltaic cell array on the roof. Completed in 2011 it provides a 420 place primary school with nursery, replacing the original school built in the early 1930's.



In 2014 Hart QS of Torquay merged with Hills, bringing considerable experience of bespoke residential projects.

2015 Phil Rumbelow becomes Managing Director. Geoff Hanna and Gary Pope are appointed directors.



In 2015 work commenced at the Carbis Bay Hotel for a multi-use venue incorporating a commercial kitchen, rooftop restaurant, beach café, ice cream parlour, three retail units, hotel accommodation, entertainment spaces, changing rooms, and public WC's as well as eight apartments with balconies overlooking the beach. Phased over four years, the project cost £13 million.

2020 has proved to be a challenging year for all the construction industry. We are proud to say that Hills adapted to the crisis well and continued to work through the pandemic to meet the needs of our clients. Projects completed during this time include Sideshore at Exmouth - a new watersports and restaurant facility; a new science block for Teign School; Hareword House, a new build residential property close to the National Trust's Greenway at Galmpton; refurbishment of Tyndale House in Cambridge; new apartment developments in Purley; and an extension to the dementia care unit at Galanos House for the Royal British Legion, continuing a working relationship that started in 2005.