



25 years of working together in Wiltshire

Foreword by Gary Mantle

The Hills Group has played an active part in Wiltshire life for more than 100 years. It has demonstrated its commitment to the communities it serves and it is the company's particular dedication to Wiltshire's wildlife that we celebrate here.

The Hills Group has been an inspiration to all those working to protect and restore Wiltshire's natural environment for its local communities. Its funding has made it possible to purchase special wildlife sites, facilitate public enjoyment and appreciation of the natural environment and increase the knowledge and understanding of the natural world among children.

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust is just one of the many organisations to have benefited from The Hills Group's support through the Landfill Communities Fund and through the generosity of the company itself to help us achieve our vision of a sustainable future for wildlife and people.

We are very lucky to have worked in partnership with The Hills Group for more than 25 years. This collaboration has recently reached a major milestone with the total amount given by the company to the Trust reaching £6.9million. This tremendous landmark in the Trust's history is a clear sign of The Hills Group's generosity and the seriousness of its respect for Wiltshire, its natural environment and people.

At a time when funding is difficult to secure and often only short term, the sustained support and continuity of funding from The Hills Group has given the Trust the confidence to tackle difficult challenges. Without the belief shown in our work by the company, we could not have achieved the successes of which we are so proud.

We have highlighted just some examples of how the remarkable support from The Hills Group has resulted in the Trust achieving key outcomes which improve the environment and encourage more people to enjoy the natural world and live more sustainable enriching lives.

Dr Gary Mantle MBE – Director, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust



*Image (front cover):
Family fun day
Mathew Roberts*

*Images (clockwise):
Pond dipping at Smallbrook Meadows
Ryan Tabor
Starlings over Rivermead
Phil Selby
Winter robin
David Kjaer
Common blue male butterfly
Darin Smith*



“ We care about the locations that give us our living and are committed to giving something back for the benefit of all communities in Wiltshire. Supporting the Trust ensures that wildlife habitats are created and protected for future generations to enjoy. ”

Mike Hill, Chief Executive, The Hills Group



Images (below):
Devil's-bit scabious at Clattinger Meadow
Stephen Davis WWT

Images (opposite clockwise):
Ladybird on fungi
Paul Hobson
Primroses
Don Sutherland
Wonderful Wildflowers event
Ryan Tabor
Winter sunrise over Salisbury Plain
Stephen Davis WWT

Creating Living Landscapes across Wiltshire

Taking a broader approach to management of the countryside and working across large areas of land, known as working at a landscape scale, is fundamental to enabling the adaptation of our natural environment to the effects of climate change.

The Hills Group has made a major contribution to facilitating this approach on Trust sites and within the farming and landowning community. Vital funding from the company has helped the Trust create eight new nature reserves, providing areas rich in wildlife, space for people to enjoy the outdoors and get closer to nature.



For over 25 years Hills has supported this Trust's work in the Braydon Forest area to the west of Swindon. Thanks to their continued support, the Living Landscape which is managed by the Trust is one of the richest wildlife areas in the UK. Elsewhere in the county, Hills' support also covers:



- 750 acres of chalk grassland conserved and restored - Wiltshire hosts 40% of the world's resource
- 1.3kms of hedgerow, 21 ponds and havens for brown hairstreak butterflies, barn owls and brown hares, have been created across Wiltshire

- One of the most important areas for biodiversity in Europe, covering nearly 300 acres around Clattinger Farm at the eastern end of the Cotswold Water Park, has been protected and is now managed as a Living Landscape
- 4 lakes, 25 acres of wetland, scrapes and islands, 13 acres of reed bed, 600 metres of the River Wylde, a visitor centre and an education centre on just one site – Langford Lakes nature reserve at Steeple Langford near Salisbury
- More than 140 farmers and landowners managing their land sympathetically for wildlife and people, supported with advice and guidance from Wiltshire Wildlife Trust
- Special stretches of the River Ray in the heart of Swindon and the River Avon in Salisbury now restored with meanders, pools, backwaters and riffles to encourage a greater diversity of wildlife
- Farming operations established to enable the sustainable management of hay meadows and chalk downland on Lower Moor Farm, Blakehill Farm and Coombe Bissett Down
- A partnership with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust resulted in six new ponds while existing wetlands were improved to ensure ideal habitats for dragonflies. A new leaflet and identification days mean that hundreds of people can now help monitor dragonflies
- 10,000 trees have been planted at High Penn Wood with the help of 100 volunteers
- Otters have finally returned to Wiltshire after 20 years of hard work.

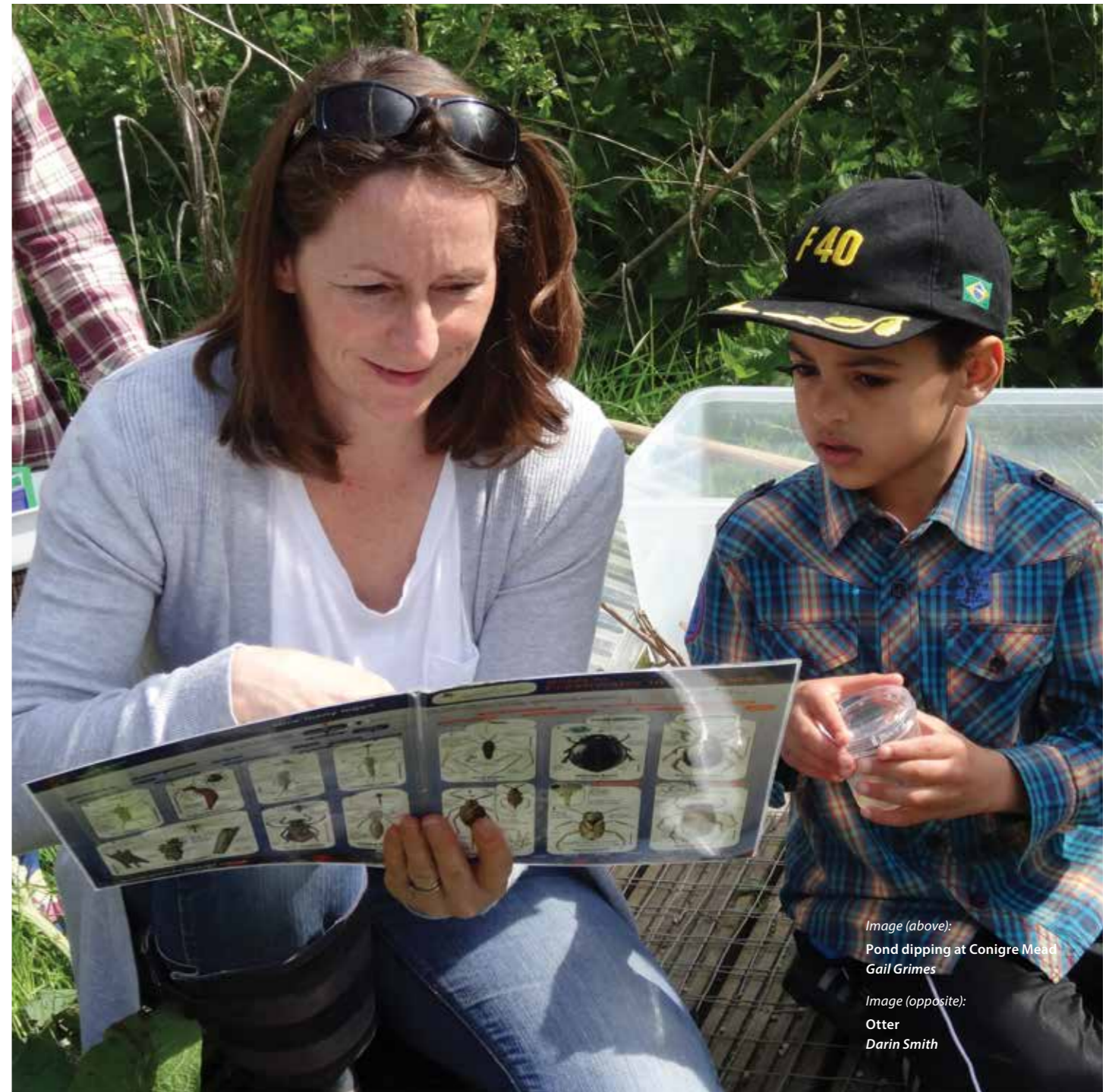
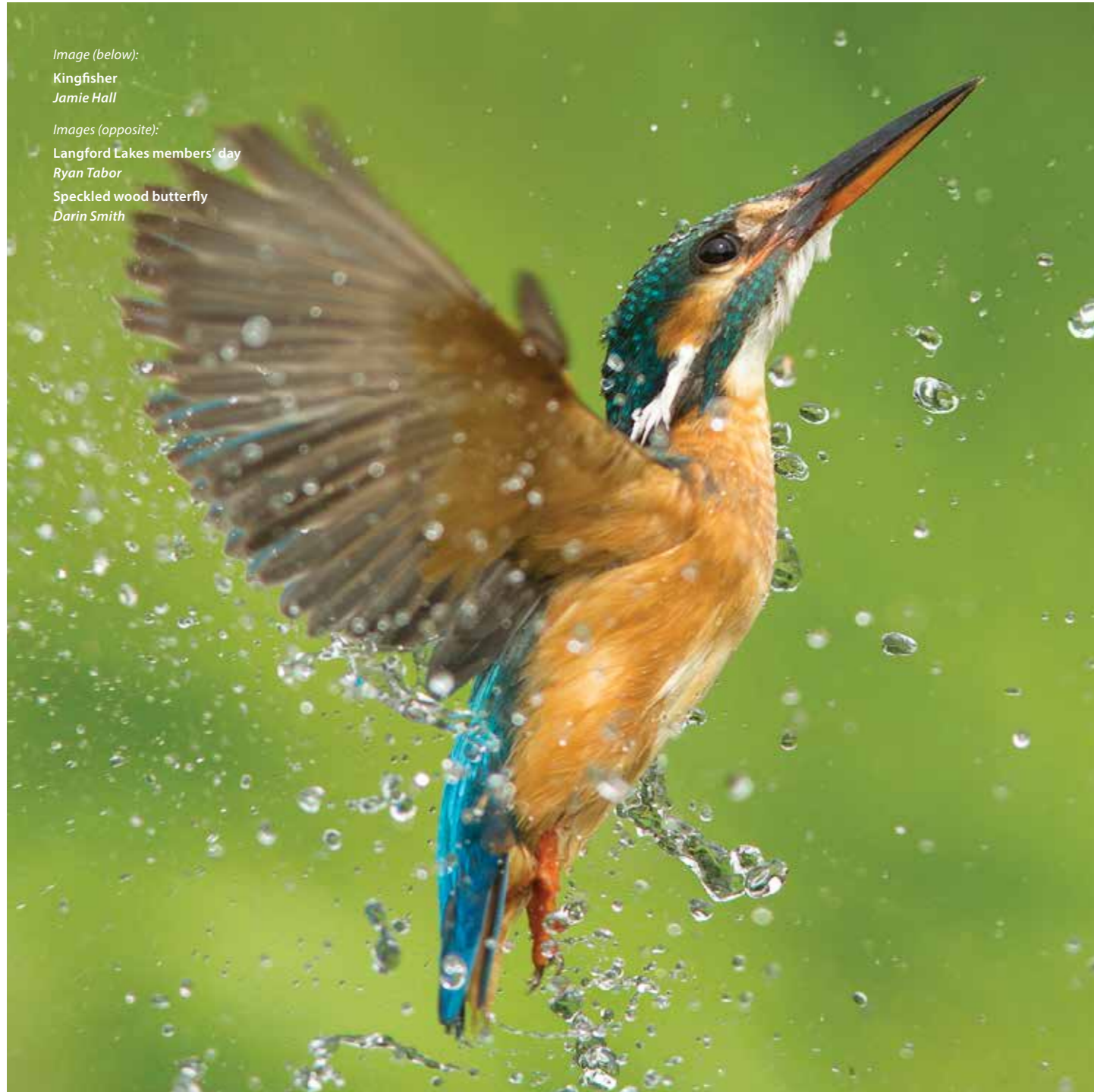


Image (above):
Pond dipping at Conigre Mead
Gail Grimes

Image (opposite):
Otter
Darin Smith

Image (below):
Kingfisher
Jamie Hall

Images (opposite):
Langford Lakes members' day
Ryan Tabor
Speckled wood butterfly
Darin Smith



Supporting the Trust's activities

Support from The Hills Group has given Wiltshire Wildlife Trust the confidence to develop and grow as an organisation and have the courage to work in new and innovative ways. The company has enabled the Trust to play its part in creating a greener Wiltshire, including encouraging communities to live more sustainably.

By demonstrating its confidence in the Trust's ability to deliver, The Hills Group's support has enabled the Trust to secure millions of pounds from other funders.



- Wiltshire Wildlife magazine becomes full colour, helping to spread the word about wildlife, environmental issues and sustainable lifestyles

- An image library of nearly 2,000 photographs of 40 wildlife sites provides a priceless resource



- Hundreds of volunteers of all ages are equipped and trained to help deliver our vision, building social cohesion and delivering vital conservation work.

Inspiring the next generation

The Hills Group has made a major contribution to ensuring Wiltshire is a county fit for our children to grow up in and become good environmental citizens of the future who care for their natural environment.

- In one year alone, 13,000 children, through 60 assemblies and 245 workshops, learnt how to recycle and protect their environment
- Thousands of children across Wiltshire became waste warriors and recycled 2,000 tonnes of paper
- Hundreds of head teachers, teachers and governors can now embed sustainability principles into their schools' ethos through conferences, advice sessions and Your Guide to Becoming a Sustainable School
- Thousands of Wiltshire's children can experience their natural environment through a chain of flower-rich meadows at Lower Moor Farm
- Over 1,000 school children in Westbury designed cotton bags, supplied by The Hills Group, with environmental messages they had learnt through the Trust's Recycle for Wiltshire waste programme which is funded by Wiltshire Council
- Solar panels demonstrate renewable energy at Langford Lakes Education Centre.



Image (above):
What lives in the water
at Lower Moor Farm?
Ryan Tabor WWT

Images (opposite):
Cotton bag winners, Westbury
Ralph Harvey
Enjoying meadows
Toos Van Noordwijk WWT
Making bird boxes
Ralph Harvey



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Photo credits left to right:

Belted galloway

Paul McRae

Heath spotted orchid

WSP

Enjoying the flowers at Blakehill Farm

Magz Knight – Maka Photography

Woodpeckers

Janet and Philip Male