

Hillhead 2026: Hottest Ticket in Town

For three sunny days (23–25 June), Tarmac's Hillhead Quarry near Buxton, Derbyshire, once again became the global meeting place for the quarrying, construction and recycling industries as Hillhead 2026 returned in spectacular style. *Quarry Management* reports



Building on the success of previous editions, Hillhead 2026 proved to be one of the largest and busiest exhibitions in the event's history. Amid exceptionally high June temperatures, a record 627 exhibitors showcased the latest products, equipment and technologies. The exhibition also recorded its busiest-ever opening day, welcoming more than 9,000 visitors on Tuesday 23 June – a first for the event.

Over the three days, Hillhead 2026 attracted 25,878 visits, including 18,395 unique trade visitors (subject to an independent ABC audit), thereby reinforcing its position as the world's largest working quarry exhibition.

As the dust settles on another exceptional event, Hillhead 2026 once again demonstrated why it remains the industry's benchmark exhibition, bringing together major product launches, engineering innovation and live working demonstrations in a unique operating environment. From battery-electric and hybrid equipment to increasingly connected, automated and digitally enabled machines, the exhibition reflected the industry's ongoing

drive towards greater productivity, improved safety and a more sustainable future.

A standout feature for 2026 was the introduction of the new curated Quarry Face demonstration programme, hosted by broadcaster Nikki Dean. Alongside the scheduled demonstrations in the Rock Processing Area (Crusher Alley) and the continuous live machine demonstrations across the Quarry Face, East and Registration Areas, visitors had an unrivalled opportunity to see the latest plant, equipment and technology in real-world working conditions.

The demonstrations brought to life many of the industry's most significant developments, including electrification, intelligent machine control, automation and digital technologies, in a real quarry environment – a defining characteristic that continues to distinguish Hillhead from every other industry exhibition.

Commenting on this year's show, Hillhead event director Richard Bradbury said: 'Hillhead has always been about bringing the industry together, and this year's event demonstrated what can be achieved when exhibitors, visitors and our

delivery partners collaborate. The result was an outstanding showcase for the quarrying, construction and recycling industries.

'The scale and quality of the demonstrations, the innovation on display and the commitment shown by so many companies created an exceptional experience for visitors. I'd like to thank everyone for the professionalism, collaboration and hard work that made Hillhead 2026 such a success.'

Visitor and exhibitor welfare remained a key priority for organizers, The QMJ Group, throughout the event. Practical guidance was shared before and during the exhibition, encouraging attendees to stay hydrated, drink responsibly, seek shade where possible, and make use of the free drinking-water refill stations (supported by Siemens Financial Services) around the showground.

Additional welfare support and extra shuttle buses were also provided throughout the event, allowing visitors to travel comfortably between the car parks and the showground. Preparations for the next edition of Hillhead are already under way, with provisional dates set for 27–29 June 2028.

Sunshine and success

Although unsettled weather had been forecast in the lead-up to the event, Hillhead 2026 opened under clear skies and warm conditions, setting the scene for one of the exhibition's busiest and most successful editions. The opening day set the tone for the week, becoming the busiest Tuesday on record at Hillhead, with more than 9,000 visitors exploring the latest equipment, technologies and live plant demonstrations.

As usual, the *QM* editorial team covered every corner of the showground throughout the three-day exhibition. The overwhelming consensus among exhibitors and visitors alike was that Hillhead 2026 was one of the best editions yet. With more live plant/machinery demonstrations, product launches, and technological solutions than ever before, Hillhead 2026 offered visitors an unrivalled opportunity to see the latest innovations in action, speak directly with OEMs and industry experts, and gain the knowledge and insights needed to inform future equipment investments, operational improvements, and business strategies.

Among the exhibitors making a strong statement were Astec ➤





Industries, who used Hillhead as the launchpad for no fewer than eight new products and patented technological innovations covering crushing, screening, washing and material handling. Alongside the European debut of its new Frontier tracked mobile crushing and screening range for hard rock applications, the company staged the global launch of its Kolberg Washing brand and showcased the Eco-Scrub modular wash plant, developed specifically for semi-mobile wet-processing operations.

The new Modex brand also made its exhibition debut, showcasing Astec's patented Vari-Frequency technology on the Pioneer 6203LPV horizontal screen, while the company's Telestack business launched the new LF527 low-feed hopper and TCL 1031 Zero heavy-duty stacker.

Michael Norris, group president – materials solutions at Astec, said: 'Hillhead 2026 has been a defining moment for Astec's materials

solutions business and a powerful demonstration of our global reach. Launching eight new products for the European market reflects our continued commitment to innovation and to delivering solutions that improve productivity, efficiency and performance. Hillhead provided the ideal stage to engage with new customers, strengthen existing relationships, and demonstrate the depth of our portfolio to visitors from across Europe and beyond.'

Terex Materials Processing also drew crowds with one of the exhibition's most comprehensive displays, showcasing an expanded aggregates portfolio featuring 18 machines across seven brands. The presentation included six models launched since Hillhead 2024, while the working demonstration areas kept visitors engaged with four machines in action – three from Finlay and one from MDS – highlighting the breadth and ongoing evolution of the Terex MP product range.

The impressive line-up combined established machines with recent product launches and next-generation technologies across crushing, screening, conveying and washing applications. Visitors explored equipment from Powerscreen, Finlay, EvoQuip, Terex Washing Systems, MAGNA and MDS, amongst others.

New product introductions included the Finlay I-130RS impact crusher, the C-1540+ cone crusher prototype – previewed ahead of its planned production launch in 2027 – and the TWS AggreScrub P80 log-washer with integrated pre-screen, underlining Terex MP's ongoing investment in core aggregates processing applications.

Hillhead 2026 also provided the backdrop for several important milestones within the Terex MP portfolio. Launched in 2024, MAGNA, the company's heavy-duty range for large-scale crushing and screening applications, made their Hillhead debut, while EvoQuip celebrated 10 years since their introduction at the show in 2016.

Speaking about the company's presence at Hillhead 2026, Terex MP president Kieran Hegarty said: 'Hillhead remains one of the most important exhibitions on the global quarrying calendar and provides the ideal platform to showcase our latest innovations, technologies, and product developments to customers from across the UK, Europe, and beyond.'

Pat Brian, vice-president of Terex Aggregates, added: 'Our presence at this year's Hillhead demonstrates how legacy brands, evolving product platforms, and new market entrants combine to form a comprehensive portfolio grounded in proven engineering and strengthened by modern digital innovation.'

'The common thread running

through everything we showcased is improving the customer experience by making equipment easier to operate, better connected and more effectively supported, while continuing to deliver the versatility and performance our customers expect on site.'

One of the standout attractions on the Powerscreen stand was a meticulously refurbished MK1 screening unit – proudly displayed to mark the brand's 60th anniversary and to serve as a fitting reminder of the manufacturer's engineering heritage. Bridging past, present and future, the display also showcased the latest generation of Powerscreen equipment, including the Chieftain 2200 triple-deck screen and the Premiertrak R450 jaw crusher, alongside an exclusive preview of the prototype 1000X Maxtrak cone crusher, offering visitors an early glimpse of the next phase of the brand's product development.

Reflecting on the exhibition, Cait Bradley, marketing manager for Powerscreen, said Hillhead 2026 had been one of the company's busiest and most memorable shows. 'Celebrating our 60th anniversary at Hillhead made this year's exhibition special,' she enthused. 'It was not just about new equipment, but also a celebration of those who built the Powerscreen brand over six decades and an opportunity to reconnect with customers, dealers, and industry friends who have been part of the journey.'

'The Hall of Fame induction was a fitting way to recognize those individuals who have made such a significant contribution to our success, while also reminding everyone that, despite our global growth, Powerscreen remain firmly rooted in the values and relationships on which the company



was built. The quality of visitors this year was exceptional, making it a fantastic show, both commercially and personally.'

Another exhibitor enjoying a highly successful Hillhead were global wet-processing specialists CDE, who showcased their ProPress X4-200 – the second-largest model in the company's next-generation automated sludge dewatering range for quarrying, mining and construction waste-recycling.

Chris Devlin, business development executive at CDE, told QM that Hillhead remains one of the company's most important trade exhibitions. 'Hillhead is a flagship event for CDE and provides the perfect opportunity to showcase our latest wet-processing innovations. It was particularly rewarding to bring the ProPress back to the show, where it debuted two years ago,' he said.

'Since then, the technology has been deployed across a wide range of applications worldwide, helping

customers improve safety, reduce site footprints by eliminating the need for settling ponds, and deliver more efficient dewatering solutions. The show itself has been a great success for us, with strong footfall on the stand and positive feedback on the ProPress and our wider portfolio of solutions.'

Kevin Valletly, chief engineer at CDE, said Hillhead provided an excellent opportunity to engage with customers and highlight the company's focus on resource recovery and the circular economy. 'One of our key messages this year was that clay should no longer be seen as a waste product but as a valuable resource with real commercial and environmental potential,' he remarked.

'From infrastructure projects and road construction to emerging decarbonization technologies, we're helping customers unlock new value from materials once discarded. We welcomed visitors from across ➤





the world, including Australia, North Africa and Scandinavia, and had excellent conversations about how our solutions can create new revenue streams while improving sustainability. Our 1:50 scale C&D recycling plant model was also a real crowd favourite, generating significant interest on our stand.'

David Hunt, managing director of Ammann UK, was also very pleased with how the show turned out, as the company took out one of its largest-ever stands at Hillhead. While Ammann's electric-drive compaction equipment and recycling-focused innovations attracted considerable attention, the OEM's intelligent automation technologies – particularly the advanced Ammann as1 asphalt plant control system – were among the stand's biggest talking points.

'We were delighted with the volume and quality of enquiries, particularly for our automation technologies, with the as1 control

system generating tremendous interest from customers seeking to improve plant efficiency, quality control, and operational performance,' said Mr Hunt.

'It was also encouraging to welcome a number of OEMs and suppliers to the stand who wouldn't normally engage with Ammann, sparking new conversations and opportunities. The quality of visitors was excellent throughout the show, and from the second day, attendance surged.'

As always, Hillhead provided the perfect stage for manufacturers to unveil their latest plant equipment, with new product launches and technology previews drawing strong interest throughout the three-day event. Among the headline debuts were JCB's new flagship 480 and 490 wheel loaders – the largest and most productive models the company has ever developed for heavy-duty quarrying and earthmoving.

JCB also showcased the new

50-tonne 520X crawler excavator at Hillhead, the largest and most powerful model in their X-Series line-up to date. Developed for quarrying and mass excavation, the 50-tonne-class machine marks a significant expansion of JCB's Heavyline range.

Chinese equipment giant LiuGong also fielded heavyweights of their own, including the new 933F and 956F excavators, purpose-built for demanding demolition, quarrying, and earthmoving applications. Joining them on the stand were the 40-tonne 8110TE battery-electric wheeled loader and the DR50CE electric mining truck, underlining the manufacturer's growing commitment to high-performance, zero-emission solutions for heavy-duty quarrying and mining operations.

Among the other exhibitors at Hillhead 2026 with construction and earthmoving equipment on display and in demonstration were SANY, Develon, McHale Komatsu, Shandong Lingong Construction Machinery (SDLG), CASE, Hyundai, XCMG, Hidromek, Zoomlion, and SMT GB/Volvo Construction Equipment.

Making a welcome return to Hillhead, Caterpillar dealers Finning UK & Ireland attracted strong interest with a showcase highlighting the latest machine technology, digital solutions, and aftermarket support for the quarrying and construction sectors. Tim Ballard, Finning's general manager for digital, technology, marketing and sales, said the company was delighted to return to Hillhead after an extended absence.

'Hillhead is the world's largest working quarry exhibition and, arguably, the most important event for the quarrying and construction industries in the UK and Ireland, so it was fantastic to be back,' he emphasized.

'The response has been overwhelmingly positive, with exceptional footfall on the stand and strong interest in our VisionLink telematics platform, Fuel Promise initiative, and enhanced Services Commitment, which includes our money-back parts and repair guarantee to help customers maximize uptime with complete confidence. It was also great to see customers – new and old – from across the world, and even competitors stopped by to say how good it was to see Finning and Caterpillar back at Hillhead.'

Hot stuff!

Following a record-breaking opening day, visitor numbers remained exceptionally strong on Wednesday 24 June, traditionally the exhibition's busiest day. By the close of business, exhibitors across the showground were reporting packed stands, a steady stream of high-quality enquiries, signed deals, and valuable new business contacts – all reinforcing the upbeat commercial atmosphere that characterized Hillhead 2026.

Across the main showground, live plant demonstrations drew large crowds, while handshakes and business meetings took place on almost every stand. The ever-present sight of visitors armed with ice creams, sun cream and sunglasses was a reminder of the pleasantly warm conditions at the world's most iconic quarry show.

One of the most striking exhibits at Hillhead 2026 came from global asphalt plant manufacturers E-MAK, whose towering E-Series asphalt plant dominated the showground and was impossible to ignore. The impressive installation became one of the exhibition's most talked-about displays, providing

the perfect platform for E-MAK to showcase their latest asphalt production technologies and discuss high-performance solutions with prospective customers.

Other exhibitors with particularly well-executed displays included Duo Group and Metso, whose joint stand combined a major new product launch with a comprehensive showcase of the latest crushing and screening technology. The worldwide premiere of the Metso ELL403 inclined screen was accompanied by a display of Metso equipment, including the C150 jaw crusher, GP500S cone crusher, and HRC8 high-pressure roll crusher.

The stand also showcased Duo Group's expanding equipment portfolio through their dealership partnership with Belgian mobile plant manufacturers Kee-track, featuring a K5e scalper on static display.

For Padraig McDermott, sales director at Duo Group, Hillhead was the obvious event to showcase the latest advances in crushing and screening technology. 'It brings together the key decision-makers from across the quarrying and aggregates industries, giving us the perfect opportunity to demonstrate new technology to those who will ultimately operate and invest in it,' he explained.

'Our presence here also reflects Duo Group's continued commitment to and investment in the UK and European aggregates markets. We have been delighted with the response to the stand, the quality of visitors, and the business discussions over the three days. In fact, we'd love an even larger stand at the next Hillhead.'

Likewise, Paul Rooney, marketing and dealer development executive at Bruce Engineering, was equally



enthusiastic about this year's exhibition, describing Hillhead 2026 as another outstanding success. 'We experienced heavy footfall on the stand from the opening day onwards, particularly on Wednesday, and welcomed a high-calibre audience from the UK and overseas,' said Mr Rooney.

'Hillhead provided the perfect opportunity to bring customers face-to-face with our Mob-E-Wash system, showcase its capabilities, and discuss how our latest mobile washing technology can benefit their operations. The quality of conversations and business





opportunities throughout the three days was first-class.’

Another exhibitor enjoying a highly successful Hillhead 2026 were Merlo, who showcased six machines from their construction range, including the P120.10 HM heavy-duty telehandler and the Cingo M700TD High Tip tracked carrier.

For Owen Buttle, national sales manager at Merlo UK, the exhibition delivered exactly what the company had hoped for. ‘Hillhead remains the best platform for Merlo to strengthen its presence in the UK market and showcase the breadth of our materials-handling range, particularly for specialist and niche applications,’ said Mr Buttle. ‘The first two days were extremely busy, and the atmosphere throughout the show was fantastic. Our position on the main ramp drew a steady stream of visitors, and the quality of enquiries and conversations has been excellent.’

Also echoing these sentiments was Iain Stansbie, marcom business development director at Stauff, a long-standing Hillhead exhibitor whose stand has occupied the same prominent position on the main ramp for many years. He told *QM*: ‘We’ve exhibited from this location for years and wouldn’t change it. It delivers a steady stream of visitors, making it an ideal place to meet both existing customers and new prospects. Hillhead 2026 has been another exceptional show, with high-quality enquiries, excellent lead generation and a great atmosphere. It continues to attract exactly the right audience, which is why it’s such an important event for Stauff.’

McLanahan, exhibiting alongside two of their ‘family of companies’ brands – Anaconda and RubbleCrusher – made another strong impression at Hillhead 2026, showcasing a range of innovative equipment and technologies for

crushing, screening, washing, and resource recovery. A major highlight was the global launch of the company’s new Discovery Wash Plant – an entry-level washing solution designed to enhance product quality without requiring a large footprint or extensive site infrastructure.

David Hunter, business line director at McLanahan, commented: ‘Hillhead is much more than a UK exhibition; it is a premier event for the aggregates, quarrying, and recycling sectors worldwide. For a global business such as McLanahan, it offers an invaluable platform to showcase our wet-processing expertise, demonstrate our latest technologies, and engage directly with customers, dealers, and industry professionals from across Europe and beyond.’

Live plant in action

The live working demonstration areas are what make Hillhead truly unique, giving visitors the opportunity to see some of the latest plant and equipment doing real work in a live quarry environment.

The showground has four separate demonstration areas:

- Quarry Face – this year, the multiple benches that make up this impressive demo area saw more than 35 machines working in tandem, including large excavators, wheel loaders, dumptrucks, dozers, hydraulic breakers, screening buckets and mist cannons.
- Rock Processing (also known as ‘Crusher Alley’) – where a range of mobile crushers, screens, and scalping grids could be seen in action.
- East Demo Area – this newly renamed area at the

eastern end of the exhibition site hosted live demonstrations featuring a range of compact crushers, screeners, conveyors, attachments, and dust-suppression equipment.

- Registration – located near the Registration Pavilion, this area hosted a range of rock-processing, recycling, and attachment demonstrations.

For a detailed round-up of the live working demonstrations across the Quarry Face, Crusher Alley, East Demo Area and the Registration Zone, see ‘Hillhead 2026 Live Demonstrations’ on pages 36-38.

Where business gets done

As always, Hillhead 2026 provided manufacturers and suppliers with the perfect opportunity to showcase their latest equipment, technologies, and services to a global audience. Across the showground, exhibitors unveiled an impressive array of machine debuts, engineering advances, and innovations shaping the future of quarrying, construction, and recycling.

McCloskey International, for example, made full use of the Hillhead stage to announce the European debut of their new J5 mobile jaw crusher, a high-capacity machine designed for demanding quarrying applications. Taking pride of place on the company’s shared stand with its UK dealer, AGGPRO, the J5 drew strong interest from visitors eager to see the latest addition to McCloskey’s equipment portfolio up close.

The exhibition also provided an ideal opportunity to underline the importance of the UK market and to celebrate McCloskey’s close working relationship with AGGPRO, as the two companies presented a united front throughout the three-day event.



Jane Halfpenny, sales director at McCloskey, said: ‘Hillhead is a strategically important exhibition for McCloskey and the perfect venue to launch the J5 into the European market. The reaction has been fantastic. We’ve been demonstrating the machine across Scotland and England over recent months and have already secured two sales, so it was great to build on that momentum at Hillhead. The show generated a wealth of high-quality enquiries, and sharing the stand with AGGPRO reinforced the strength of our partnership and our commitment to customers across the UK.’

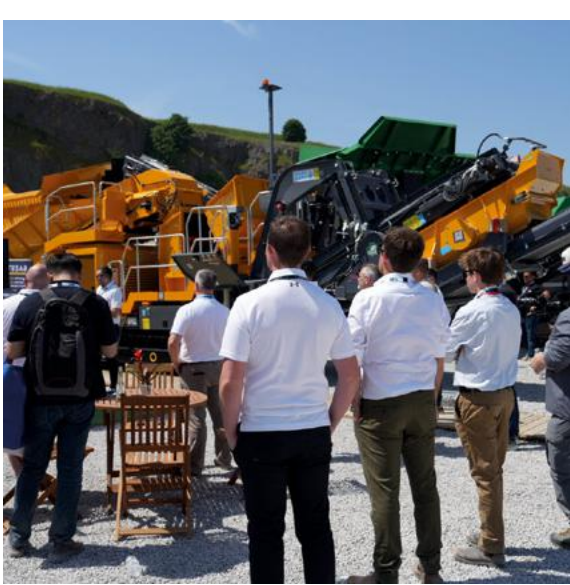
Another exhibitor enjoying a highly rewarding Hillhead 2026 were Tyrone International, who took their largest-ever stand to showcase a comprehensive portfolio of wet-processing, recycling, and water-treatment solutions. Highlights included the new T-Scalp 125, a fully electric static scalper; the TrackWash Pro 120 mobile wash plant; and the T-Press mobile filter press, giving visitors the opportunity to see the OEM’s latest innovations in aggregate

processing and sludge dewatering at close quarters.

James Scott, head of digital at Tyrone International, described Hillhead as a tremendous success. ‘Hillhead provided the perfect platform to connect with customers, dealers, suppliers and industry professionals from across the UK and around the world.’

‘We’ve sold every machine we brought to the show, are progressing further deals, have generated a significant number of new enquiries, and have opened discussions with potential dealer partners across Europe. It has been a fantastic exhibition and a great opportunity to demonstrate how Tyrone’s innovative technologies are helping customers improve productivity, profitability, and sustainability.’

Continuing the positive theme, Circular and Pilot Crushtec also reported a successful Hillhead 2026, with both companies enjoying strong footfall, high-quality customer engagement, and encouraging business activity throughout the show. ➤





Speaking at the unveiling of their Stage V-compliant TwisterTrac VS350E mobile, track-mounted vertical shaft impact (VSI) crusher for the UK and wider European markets, Pilot Crushtec's sales and marketing director, Francois Marais, said the scale and quality of visitors had exceeded the business's expectations.

'I was blown away by the calibre of visitors coming through the stand,' stressed Mr Marais. 'We've generated a significant number of high-quality sales leads and had excellent discussions with customers from across the UK and Europe. A recurring theme has been the demand for crushing equipment that is simple to operate, easy to maintain, and delivers lower operating costs without compromising productivity.'

Making their Hillhead debut, wet-processing specialists Circular used the exhibition to raise their profile across the UK and Irish markets.

Director Eoin Heron explained: 'Now in our sixth year as a business, we felt the time was right to exhibit at Hillhead. It's an incredibly important exhibition for our home markets, and it gave us the perfect opportunity to showcase our washing expertise and build wider brand awareness.'

'The show has been outstanding, generating far more sales leads and new business opportunities than we anticipated. The Hillhead team has been brilliant throughout, and the event has been exceptionally well organized. We'll certainly be back in 2028.'

Other companies making their exhibition debuts at this year's Hillhead included High Peak Access and Munro Vehicles. Emily Noble, managing director of High Peak Access, said the exhibition offered an excellent opportunity for the SME contractor to strengthen relationships with existing clients and to introduce its specialist access solutions to new customers.

'Hillhead is a fantastic event for a local business like ours. It allows us to demonstrate the breadth of our rope access, geotechnical, and drone surveying services while meeting existing and potential customers face-to-face,' commented Ms Noble. 'The response to our stand – particularly our drone capabilities – has been extremely positive. It's been a valuable few days for building new connections and showcasing what High Peak Access can offer the quarrying industry.'

For Tim Holbrow, chief finance officer of Munro, whose all-electric 4x4 utility vehicle attracted strong interest at the show, Hillhead provided the ideal platform to introduce the brand to the aggregates sector. 'Hillhead has been a terrific opportunity to put Munro in front of the right audience and start meaningful conversations,' remarked Mr Holbrow. 'The reaction has been highly positive because people quickly understand that this isn't simply an electric vehicle – it's a heavy-duty industrial tool built for the toughest working environments.'

One exhibitor enjoying strong business at Hillhead 2026 were Hitachi Construction Machinery (UK), who used the show to present an impressive line-up of 10 excavators, ranging from the compact ZX17U-6 to the 49-tonne ZX490-7 model. According to Nick Woolliscroft, area sales executive at HCMUK, the show exceeded all expectations. 'Tuesday gave us a solid start, but Wednesday was exceptional,' he commented. 'The stand was absolutely packed, with around three times the footfall of the opening day. We were agreeing deals on the stand, providing quotations for multiple machines and speaking to a constant stream of customers.'

Newly introduced exhibits, on

show for the first time at Hillhead, included EDGE Innovate's Screenpro S16 mobile scalping screen, which sales director Tom Connolly said had received an extremely positive response from visitors, who were impressed by its performance, versatility and productivity.

Also making their Hillhead debut were the new MB-P and MB-PT demolition pulverizers from MB Crusher, the latest additions to the OEM's attachment range for demolition applications. Alessia Valerio, senior content and media strategist at MB Crusher, said the response had been excellent, with their stand buzzing throughout the show. 'We've had the same position on the main ramp since we first exhibited at Hillhead and wouldn't swap it,' she noted. 'The footfall has been fantastic, the atmosphere has been brilliant, and we're delighted with the visitor response to the new MB-P and MB-PT range.'

Celebrating their 50th anniversary, Brokk UK showcased a comprehensive line-up of demolition robots, attachments, and ancillary equipment from across their own portfolio and those of their sister/partner brands. Stuart Morton, area sales manager at Brokk UK, said: 'Hillhead is one of the key events in our calendar and the perfect opportunity to demonstrate the breadth of our product offering.'

Liebherr-Great Britain were equally positive about the benefits of exhibiting at Hillhead 2026, bringing one of their most comprehensive displays to date, featuring telehandlers, the new PR 736 Generation 8 crawler dozer and TA 230 ADT, as well as the latest Generation 8 operator cab, amongst others. Joe Palmer, managing director of Liebherr-GB, told *QM*: 'Hillhead 2026 has been one of our best shows to date. We've been relentlessly



busy over the past three days, with an excellent response to both our latest machines and our Gen 8 cabin technology.'

Hillhead 2026 also welcomed a group of Year 9 students from Chapel-en-le-Frith High School, who spent a day exploring the exhibition and learning about the wide range of careers available across the quarrying and mineral products sector. Coordinated by Minerals Matter and industry volunteers, the students visited several exhibitors' stands, gaining first-hand insight into modern quarrying, engineering, and processing technologies, helping to inspire the next generation of talent.

Last but not least, the Strategic Safety Forum (SSF) used Hillhead 2026 to launch a revised suite of industry qualifications that have underpinned competency in the mineral products sector for more than two decades. Developed over the past two years by the SSF's core member organizations – the Mineral Products Qualifications Council (MPQC), Mineral Products

Association (MPA), British Aggregates Association (BAA), Institute of Quarrying (IQ), and Quarries National Joint Advisory Council (QNJAC) – the updated framework includes the newly launched Level 4 Diploma in Managing Health, Safety and the Environment in Mineral Processing Operations, alongside a redesigned Level 6 qualification focused on site management, leadership and operational performance.

Acknowledgments

The QMJ Group – the organizers of Hillhead 2026 – would like to express their gratitude to Tarmac Ltd for permission to use the Hillhead site. With a plethora of services and facilities made possible by the generous support of the show's sponsors, QMJ would also like to thank the following companies: ATG, A-Trax, BDS Market Intelligence, Certas Energy, CheckProof, Eriez, Invest Northern Ireland, Kramp, McLanahan, NTN, Siemens and Zoomlion.





Hillhead 2026 Live Demonstrations



Quarry Face Demo Area

This year, Hillhead introduced a new way to experience some of the latest heavy machinery in action at the Quarry Face Demonstration Area. At selected times over the three days, leading manufacturers put their machines through their paces as part of a dynamic, curated live show hosted by broadcaster and technology presenter Nikki Dean.

Combining machine demonstrations with expert commentary, all the action was streamed on to a giant LED screen set against the dramatic quarry face backdrop, allowing visitors to see exactly what today's most advanced machines can do in a real working quarry environment while hearing directly from the manufacturers, engineers, innovators, and operators behind the equipment. Featuring CASE, Hitachi, Hyundai, JCB, Komatsu, LiuGong, SANY, SBM

Mineral Processing, XCMG, and Corgin, the curated demonstration sessions took place daily at 11:00, 12:30 and 14:00.

CASE used the curated demos to present their 1121G+ X-DRIVE wheel loader, designed to enhance productivity, efficiency, operator comfort, and safety across quarrying and recycling operations. The machine features an advanced continuously variable transmission for smooth speed control, full traction, and reduced engine rev/min, delivering up to 20% fuel savings compared with conventional powershift systems.

Hitachi's ZX490-7 excavator also made a strong impression. Powered by the same engine class as the larger Zaxis-7 models, this high-performance machine is designed for demanding operating conditions, combining reliability, fuel efficiency, and productivity to



support heavy-duty quarrying and earthmoving applications.

Hyundai's all-new HX400L next-generation crawler excavator and HA45A 4x4 articulated dumptruck worked in tandem during a quarry loading and hauling demonstration. Delivering fast loading cycles, efficient material movement, and advanced safety technology, this latest high-production quarry package combines productivity, fuel efficiency, and operator comfort to meet the demands of modern quarrying applications.

JCB demonstrated the quarrying and earthmoving credentials of their brand-new 50-tonne 520X and 40-tonne 420X excavators. Combining efficient hydraulic systems, high breakout forces and stable operating platforms, the curated demo highlighted the machines' strong bucket fill, rapid cycle times and controlled operation during demanding quarry face work.

Power met precision as Komatsu's WA485-11 wheel loader and HM460-6 articulated dumptruck demonstrated efficient loading and hauling performance. Fast cycle times, smooth bucket control, and high payload capacity highlighted the combination's productivity, fuel efficiency, and integrated machine performance across heavy-duty quarry applications.

LiuGong's live curated demo showcased a fully integrated battery-electric quarry solution – their 50-tonne payload DR50CE rigid dumptruck, 4280DE motor-grader, and 8110TE wheel loader, working together as a connected fleet to deliver high productivity, zero tailpipe emissions, and reduced operating costs in demanding quarrying applications.

Power and efficiency combined as SANY machines drove productivity across the quarry face in their curated demo. An SY500H excavator fed the on-site crusher with a consistently high volume of material, while an all-electric SW956E wheel loader supported efficient material handling across the site. Fast cycle times, precise control and intelligent system integration highlighted SANY's focus on performance, sustainability, and operational efficiency.

SBM Mineral Processing put the REMAX 450 through its paces at the quarry face. Engineered for high-efficiency aggregate production, this hybrid-electrified mobile impact crusher and integrated screening solution processed Hillhead limestone at rates of up to



450 tonnes/h while consuming less than 25 litres of fuel per hour.

XCMG demonstrated the smooth hydraulic performance, rapid loading capability, and heavy-duty productivity of their XE300E excavator and XC998 wheel loader. Together, the machines highlighted the strength, efficiency, and operator-focused engineering underpinning XCMG's growing presence across quarrying, infrastructure, and construction applications.

Rounding out the curated demos, high-performance dust suppression was showcased through Corgin's portfolio of mobile dust-control solutions, including the MistCannon Ranger, MistCannon Integral, and DustLayer, as well as their DustFast water-saving surface treatment. Together, these systems support site safety, operational efficiency, and environmental compliance.

Beyond the curated demonstration programme, the Quarry Face Demonstration Area hosted live action from more than 35 machines operating across three benches along an extended length of the quarry face. A wide range of excavators, wheel loaders, articulated dumptrucks, attachments, and other support equipment were put through their paces throughout the show days in this real-world quarry environment.

Aside from the companies mentioned above, other manufacturers demonstrating equipment included Caterpillar, Develon, Volvo Construction Equipment, Worsley Plant, and Zoomlion, amongst others, with demonstrations showcasing machine capability, power, reach, and productivity in demanding working conditions.

Large excavator demonstrations featured prominently throughout the

area, including a 36-tonne Cat 336, a 36-tonne Develon DX360-LC-7, a 30-tonne Hidromek HMK 310LC-5, and a 35-tonne Zoomlion ZE385G. Alternative power and low-emission technologies also featured strongly, with Volvo Construction Equipment demonstrating an electric line-up, including their EC230 electric excavator, L120H electric wheel loader, and Volvo eFMX Tridem rigid truck, while Munro Vehicles showcased their Series-M 4x4 electric vehicles.

Processing and attachment technologies were also demonstrated across the area, with Worsley Plant putting a range of specialist excavator attachments from Rotar, Remu and Montabert through their paces, while Rock Extraction's new RKX-Volt 100k electric breaker made its world debut. Mounted on a 20-tonne Hitachi carrier, this ground-breaking piece of kit took part in live rock-breaking demonstrations throughout the show.



Rock Processing Demo Area

As usual, the Rock Processing Demo Area, commonly known as 'Crusher Alley', gave visitors the chance to see a wide range of mobile crushers, screens, and scalping grids operating in real-world conditions. Fed by material extracted from the Quarry Face Demo Area, the machines on demonstration allowed visitors to see full processing trains operating in a real quarry environment. Participating companies included Anaconda (part of McLanahan), Astec Industries, Finlay, GIPO, McCloskey International, RubbleCrusher (part of McLanahan), and Rubble Master.

Heading the line-up from the eastern end of 'Crusher Alley', McLanahan companies Anaconda and RubbleCrusher demonstrated a combination of crushing and screening equipment, including Anaconda's J12 primary jaw crusher and versatile DF514 scalping screen, and the highly mobile RubbleCrusher RC-J72. Together, these machines ➤



showcased productive, efficient, and flexible material-processing solutions under real quarry operating conditions.

The live crushing demonstrations continued with Rubble Master, who demonstrated the RM 120X, their flagship mobile impact crusher, showcasing high-capacity crushing performance, intelligent automation and fuel-efficient operation.

Next door were Astec Industries, who demonstrated their Frontier JA45 mobile jaw crusher alongside their Frontier SDF16 mobile screen, showcasing effective primary crushing and high-capacity screening for demanding material-processing applications. Combining robust construction, rapid set-up and user-friendly operation, the machines are designed to maximize on-site productivity and processing efficiency.

At Hillhead 2026, Finlay demonstrated a complete crushing, screening, and material recovery train, featuring their J-1170+ jaw crusher, C-1540+ prototype cone crusher, and 694 inclined screen, demonstrating efficient crushing, screening, and material separation in demanding quarry applications.

Nearby, SMT GB showcased



a complete quarrying and materials-processing operation, highlighting both conventional and zero-emission technologies. The demonstration featured Volvo's A30 articulated hauler, ECR355 crawler excavator, EWR150 wheeled excavator, and EC230 Electric excavator, working alongside a McCloskey J5 jaw crusher and a GIPO RR 130-10-10 roller grizzly plant. The display demonstrated how advanced machine control, fuel-efficient performance, and innovative electric power solutions can enhance operational output while reducing environmental impact in modern quarrying and construction applications.

Supporting technologies were also featured in the live displays. Fogmaker UK & Ireland showcased a trailer-mounted fire-suppression unit, while ACE Plant demonstrated a range of dust-suppression and site-support equipment, including a Manitou 9324 telehandler with Quick Spray attachment, a 9,000-litre DSU system complete with a rain gun and a spinning disc, and a Pramac Generac DF7500 mobile power tank with a Smart Dust Fighter system.

East Demo Area

The newly renamed East Demonstration Area (formerly known as the Recycling Demo Area) gave visitors the chance to see a wide range of compact crushers, screeners, conveyors, as well as excavators, loading shovels, dumptrucks, attachments and dust-suppression systems in action. Participating companies included LiuGong, SDLG, JCB, Herbst, Portafill, Engcon, and Dustquip.

Among the live demonstrations, Herbst showcased a wide selection of equipment, including their C900 Crusher, 900 Agri Crusher, S74F Screener and S4080 conveyor, whilst Portafill demonstrated their MI-11R impact crusher. Electric and low-

emission machinery also featured in the area, with SDLG showcasing their L958H EV wheel loader.

Meanwhile, attachment technology specialists Engcon demonstrated a tiltrotator system and attachments mounted on a 20-tonne excavator, highlighting increased machine versatility and precision across a range of operating tasks, whilst Dustquip demonstrated dust-suppression solutions, operating three JM40 Jet Mister units throughout the show.

Registration Demo Area

Situated near the showground's main entrance, the Registration Demo Area showcased a wide range of compact equipment, attachments, specialist demolition tooling, dust-suppression systems, and rock-processing technology. Designed to give visitors a close-up view of machinery in action, the area highlighted practical solutions for quarrying, construction, demolition, recycling, and infrastructure applications from companies, including Air Spectrum, INMALO, Kinshofer/Auger Torque, MB Crusher, Red Rhino Crushers, Rototilt UK, RSP Suction Excavators, Steelwrist, and Yanmar Compact Equipment.

Among the live demonstrations, RSP Suction Excavators' ESE 6 suction vehicle was in operation, showcasing specialist non-destructive excavation technology for utility and infrastructure applications. Rototilt UK brought a 140-tonne excavator with quick-change attachments to demonstrate the versatility and efficiency of tiltrotator systems in demanding working environments. Steelwrist also demonstrated excavator attachment systems, including tiltrotator technology designed to improve machine flexibility, precision, and productivity on site.

Material processing and recycling technologies also featured prominently in this area, with MB Crusher demonstrating crusher buckets, pulverizers, and screening attachments for on-site material-processing applications, alongside Red Rhino Crushers, who demonstrated their 8000 compact mobile jaw crusher, while Kinshofer/Auger Torque displayed a selection of specialist excavator attachments, including grapples, tiltrotators, and augers.

Dust-suppression technology was another key feature of this area, with Air Spectrum demonstrating a large-throw water cannon, a rotary atomizer, and a mist system, while INMALO put their Motofog MF40SD, RFA20, and SC40SS dust-suppression systems through their paces. **QM**

