

Congratulations to Paul Welch for 40 years of continuous service!

Celebrations were held in Hastings on Thursday, 2 September, 2010 to congratulate Paul Welch on his 40 years of excellent service as a gardener/supervisor to Hastings Borough Council.

All Paul's work colleagues attended the presentation together with Sam Russell, Richard Suter and Nick Philips from Hastings Borough Council, Martin Prior (former tractor driver), Roy Ling (former parks superintendent), Dennis Mitchell (former union representative) and former contract manager Sean Towey. Paul's wife Sue and son Alan also attended.

Despite previous fears that he might have guessed something was afoot, when the presentation was 'sprung' on Paul he was genuinely surprised.

Firstly Paul's wife, Sue, was presented with a bouquet as a thank you from all at QSL for her support. After a few words by Steve McKeown, Quadron's Area Manager, to describe the magnitude of Paul's 40 years of continuous service, the presentation of a die cast model tractor was made. The room rang with applause and Paul was clearly moved. Marshall Haley, Contract Manager, offered some kind words to describe his opinion of Paul as both a man and a supervisor.



Above, Area Manager Steve McKeown presents Paul with a model tractor and Paul driving the old Massey.



As a final surprise Marshall led Paul outside to an old Massey Ferguson tractor that had been quietly parked next to the current Massey tractor. This tractor was the same model Paul had driven for the corporation. Paul leapt onto the tractor and drove once around the yard just like the eager newly-qualified 17 year old had done 37 years before.

Client officer Peter Mead thanked Paul for his considerable input over the years and said that he has made a very significant contribution to the town.



Above, group shot with the Hastings team, including Client Officers and former colleagues, with Paul and his son Alan in the centre.

Paul's career highlights

- ▶ Paul joined Hastings Borough Council as a boy gardener at the age of 15 in September 1970, following his ambition to become a tractor driver.
- ▶ His Dad and two brothers all had the same initials and all worked for the Council in the seventies so they were referred to as PA Welch 1, 2, 3 or 4.
- ▶ He reported to work for the first time in the very depot (Alexandra Park) where he is still based today.
- ▶ His first day was spent removing weeds from the bowling green and the flower beds in Alexandra Park.
- ▶ He was paid weekly in cash in a little brown envelope earning £5 15s for a 40 hour week.
- ▶ Paul learnt to drive during his lunch hours paying 90p a lesson and in 1972, after 23 lessons, realised his dream of driving a tractor.

Refurbishment of the War Memorial



Barry Pescott and Peter Barrasford help the restoration



Peter Barrasford attending to the finer details

The Council has spent a lot of time and money on restoration of the Grade II listed Hastings War Memorial obelisk.

Most materials had to be replaced in their original format. Quadron assisted with the soft infill of the grass upper face and in planting a yew hedge to surround the site.

Four new playgrounds added



Scott Woods on duty

The council has now added four new adventure playgrounds to the twenty one already in existence in the town. Scott Woods has his hands full with the extra work involved with additional sand pits and circuit training runs.

The addition of the largest skate bowl in the country will also create extra tasks for Quadron, requiring new ways of dealing with the challenging problems that it will bring.

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