

## Former Cornish wrestling champ wins apprenticeship award

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A former Cornish Wrestling champion from Helston who developed a taste for studying in his 40s has been named Most Committed Student on his apprenticeship programme this year.

Matthew Deacon works for Coastline Services carrying out Grounds Maintenance contracts and has just completed a Level 2 Apprenticeship in Horticulture through Cornwall College.

Matthew says:  
"Around a year ago I didn't even know how to switch on a computer, but I've learned so much during the course of my apprenticeship, it's been fantastic. It's a big achievement for me and something I never thought I would do."

Lea Thomas, Customer Advisor at Cornwall College, adds: "Initially Matthew had been very reluctant to embark on the apprenticeship, as his school days had not been a positive experience. He has come a long way since then, achieving skills in both Maths and English, as well as learning the Latin names of the plants that he works with. He has a young daughter who has been able to support him with the computer skills needed for his homework, and, in turn, he has taken her for walks, and taught her the Latin names of the trees that surround their home. Matthew has taken such pleasure from the course, and is a joy to teach. He is a prime example of how more mature apprentices can flourish from the apprenticeship experience."

Matthew gathered with a number of staff from Coastline Services, Coastline Housing and Cornwall College to be presented with his award in Redruth.

Chris Weston, Director of Development and Commercial Sales at Coastline Housing, said: "Matthew is a shining example of the great things an apprenticeship can bring to someone at any stage in their career. Traditionally thought to be just for school-leavers, apprenticeships have become so much more. They are perfect for people looking for a career change at any point in their life. We're incredibly proud of Matthew and all that he does for Coastline day in, day out. He's a real asset to our team."

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