



## Bloomin' marvellous!

Young horticulturalist Paul Boardman of Halton Borough Council has been named the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) Young Horticulture Apprentice of The Year at special awards nights on Thursday 16 October at a glittering ceremony in Stoke on Trent.

19 year old Paul impressed judges by telling them of his desire to become a gardener after watching local council gardeners in Victoria Park in his home town whilst Paul was studying for his A levels. Turning his back on an academic based career Paul enthused to judges about how *"working in the horticulture industry provided a great sense of personal satisfaction"*.

Presenting the awards APSE Chief Executive Paul O'Brien said *"We welcome Government moves to expand the apprenticeships available to young people through the new Apprenticeships Bill. Young people like Paul Boardman show the true value of apprenticeships in providing an excellent career path and a fantastic local service"* adding *"The result of Paul's enthusiasm is visible across Halton's parks. Congratulations to Paul and to Halton Borough Council who have taken the time to invest in skills which benefit not only young people but the citizens of Halton"*.

Paul beat finalists from other councils throughout the UK and a short list which included:

- Gerard McGrath, North Lanarkshire Council
- John Fallens, West Lothian Council
- Joe Jarvis , South Derbyshire DC
- Alex Sibley, Cardiff County Borough Council
- Sean Belshaw , Glasgow City Council

### Ends

#### Notes to editors

APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence works with over 250 local councils throughout the UK

APSE promotes excellence in front lines service and encourages local authorities to involve their front line services in apprenticeship schemes

For further press information, or to arrange for interview please call Mo Baines at APSE on 0161 772 1810 or mobile 07971 843515 or email [mbaines@apse.org.uk](mailto:mbaines@apse.org.uk)

A jpeg image of the winner is available upon request. Please email [asteele@apse.org.uk](mailto:asteele@apse.org.uk)