

Covid port star celebrates MBE at Buckingham Palace with wife and boss

A port operations director from Grimsby has celebrated his MBE award for outstanding service during the pandemic at Buckingham Palace.

Steve Williams had his selfless actions at the onset of Covid-19 honoured at a royal garden party hosted by The Duchess of Cornwall.

Working on the UK's major fresh produce terminal in Portsmouth, he made the decision to stay by the Solent for three months, ensuring a 24/7 service was maintained.

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Not only did he not see his family for the duration, he also returned to the crane cab to provide vital cover for staff illness at Portico – as the facility is known – ensuring shops remained stocked at a time of heightened anxiety.

The 60-year-old chose the option of the garden party to celebrate his honour, and was accompanied by his wife Mandy and port director of Portsmouth International Port, Mike Sellers.

Both have held senior positions on the Humber.

“I am very humbled and proud,” he said. “I have spent over 34 years in the industry, supported throughout by my beautiful wife who was by my side at the garden party, so this honour is recognition for us both.



(Image: Portico)

“No honour would be received without the support of your co-workers, and I am proud that the industry is recognised as key workers, supporting the country through these very difficult times.

“Although it was a difficult decision to remain in Portsmouth, away from my family with no end date, being on site at Portico was my duty. It was a privilege to support the team in any way I could help, for as long as it was needed.”

The award was [announced in September 2020](#), with palace officials having been briefed on the efforts – which included refreshing his crane operating skills.

Mike said: “Steve would be too modest to discuss any of his efforts, praising his management team and also staff for all stepping up. However it’s because he led by example that everyone at Portico was inspired to continue working hard.

“Steve stepped into a range of positions, helping in warehouses and unloading ships, clocking up long hours and visiting the site daily to help staff morale.

“If that wasn’t tough enough, it was against the backdrop of being away from his family, especially his wife who was alone in Lincolnshire.

“I want to thank Steve for the selfless part he played in making sure vital goods kept moving to where they were needed most, and also for inviting me to accompany him to the royal garden party.”

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