

General Manager, Daniel Straughan, loves the variety of working for his family's business WL Straughan & Son Ltd in Bedlington. Born and bred in the town, Daniel works alongside his dad, Phil, and mum, Denise, to help run the company based on Lane Farm.



Laying the groundwork

The company works on outdoor maintenance and specialises in getting sites ready for development, many of which are Arch developments. They have been successful in winning tenders to work on several Arch development sites, helping the business and the County at the same time.

Here, Daniel tells us what it's like to work with his family, and shares his views on the importance of employing local people and supporting the South East Northumberland community.

What is it like working with your parents on a daily basis?

I really enjoy working with my family and feel it is important to help them run the business. My parents, Phil and Denise, set up the company about 35 years ago and are both Managing Directors. I'm the General Manager and alongside my right hand man Gary Miller, I oversee the day-to-day running of the business.

We also run two other companies from our base on Lane Farm – Lane Farm Equestrian and Greenleaf Recycling Centre – so we're incredibly busy. I manage the contracting side of the business and my dad, Phil, oversees the recycling centre – a green waste disposal service where we turn green waste and horse manure into compost. Then my mum, Denise, manages the Equestrian Centre, which includes an indoor, and two outdoor arena's where we hold

equestrian competitions and a livery facility. WL Straughan specialises in site clearance, landscaping – both hard and soft so we do tarmacking, concreting, kerbing, paving, fencing, constructing pathways, grass seeding, tree planting etc. We work on a wide range of projects and cover a huge area from across Northumberland to Cumbria and up to the Scottish borders. At the moment we're doing the landscaping on the Morpeth Northern Bypass and we're also working at Wallington Hall doing footpath construction. I love the variety of work, travelling around our different projects and developing new commercial opportunities.

How did you get involved in working with Arch?

When Arch invest in a new site, we tender for works and if we win the work, our role is to go along and clear it for them and then do the groundworks such as drainage and concreting so they can begin building new developments.

What do you think the new investment and developments have done for Bedlington?

There are some fantastic green spaces in Bedlington like Plessey Woods and Attlee Park and it's been great to see investment into improving these areas. The refurbishment of the bandstand in Attlee Park was important as it played such a significant role in the town's mining heritage. The new facilities at Gallagher Park are great for local young people, as it provides additional leisure activities in the town.

“Our role is to help Arch get individual sites ready for the first stage of development.”

How do you feel that WL Straughan has helped Bedlington and South East Northumberland?

We are incredibly passionate about the town and local community and as a family run business based in South East Northumberland we want to employ as many people from the area as possible. It is important to continue developing our businesses to help increase employment opportunities and to boost the local economy. At the moment we employ 50 people on the contracting side of the business and have a really strong workforce that we would like to grow further.

For more information visit www.wlstraughan.co.uk and www.lanefarmequestrian.co.uk

