

FREE FASHION TRAVEL PEOPLE IDEAS BEAUTY

STYLIST

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this season's most tactile trends

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A ONE-DAY DIARY
FROM MORNING LATTE TO
LIGHTS OUT

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Laura Cottom, Maintenance Team Leader

Laura Cottom, 26, is a maintenance team leader for Clear Channel UK. She lives in Liverpool with her family



ON SITE: LAURA CHECKS AND REPAIRS DAMAGED BUS STOP SITES ACROSS MERSEYSIDE

MY ALARM GOES OFF...

At 5am. I'll get dressed in steel-capped boots, a fleece, combat trousers and hi-vis vest. It's too early for breakfast but I might make a pasta salad for lunch before getting into my van. I'll check my paperwork to see what site I'm going to first and leave at 7.15am.

I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR...

Overseeing the maintenance of Clear Channel advertising units in the Merseyside area, which are often located within bus shelters. We repair damaged units and replace posters within them every two weeks. The most common problem is smashed glass, although the strangest thing I've had to remove from a shelter was a set of furniture. Apparently it was an art installation.

I GOT MY JOB...

Because I've always been interested in DIY – I helped my dad fitting kitchen units from a young age and enjoyed it. I studied hairdressing but in 2010 wanted a complete change. I joined British Gas and worked my way up but

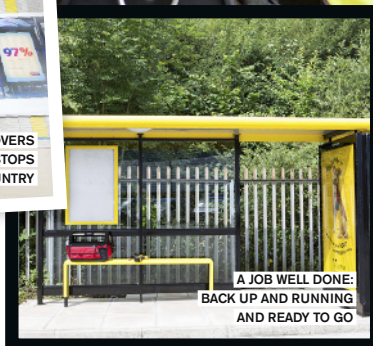


CLEAR CHANNEL COVERS THE AD SITES ON BUS STOPS AROUND THE COUNTRY

after six years I wanted to progress further. I spotted this job on a recruitment site – it looked like a challenge, with plenty of room for growth. I started in 2016.

MY TYPICAL DAY...

Begins with audits; I'll check repairs on damaged sites done by my team of eight, to make sure they're done correctly. Each morning I'll inspect 50 sites with a few miles drive between them. Around 11.30am I eat lunch, either from home or I'll buy a turkey and ham sub. At 12.30pm I'll be back at the depot; by now new repair jobs will have been sent over to us – we have to attend to them within 14 hours or seven days, depending on



A JOB WELL DONE: BACK UP AND RUNNING AND READY TO GO

the urgency. I'll check we have the correct stock for incoming jobs and allocate them to my team. We'll tackle anything from 10 to 50 assignments a day. If anyone's sick or on holiday, I'll go out and assist with urgent repairs. If I stay at the depot, I'll do health and safety checks and chase stock orders. If there's a road traffic accident that damages one of our advertising sites – which happens about twice a month – I'll stay to do paperwork and wait for specialist contractors to make the site safe, which takes a while

if police are involved. Usually I'll leave around 4pm.

MY MOST MEMORABLE WORK MOMENT...

Was being asked to after-work drinks by my all-male team. At first they were unsure of me but I went out on jobs and they saw I was perfectly capable. That invitation felt like they'd finally accepted me.

THE WORST PART OF MY JOB...

Is not being able to do street repairs every day. As team leader, I have a lot of office-based administration; I'd like to be seeing my team's daily experiences more.

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB...

Is completing my targets – I hit a year's objective of 461 repairs in my first three months. It proves to management I can handle the role.

AFTER WORK...

I'll do hairdressing three times a week until 9pm. My boyfriend and I take the dogs for a walk and then I'll have dinner with my family, usually lasagne or a curry. I'm in bed by 10pm as I'm up early.

My Plan B: Theatrical Make-up Artist

I'd have specialised in make-up for horror movies; I love all the fake blood, limbs and gore. When Halloween comes around, I really enjoy it. I'm always painting huge cuts and injuries over my face.