



FIVE MINUTES WITH...

## Louise Russell

Group Competent Authority  
px Group Head Office

### What was your ambition when you were at school?

To marry a footballer, but unfortunately that didn't work out! My mum said I wanted to work in Woolworths on the till and as my first job was in a shop, my ambition was fulfilled at quite an early age at Liptons. Like most kids I didn't know what I wanted to do when I was at school – I was good at science so ended up studying Environmental Biology at university.

### How did you get into the engineering industry?

By accident – I'd finished my degree and needed to find a job (footballers were still in short supply), environmental jobs were scarce so I applied for an HSE Assistant role at company called Enron. I'd never set foot on an industrial site before and had limited knowledge on health and safety, however I was willing to learn and this was noted through the interview process.

### Can you explain what your job entails on a day to day basis?

It varies depending on business needs but in short providing SHEQ compliance support for the business as a whole. I deal with a range of external agencies as the key contact ensuring that px Group complies with the necessary regulations required to keep our operations going.

### How has the Coronavirus pandemic changed your role and responsibilities and how have you adapted?

I have been actively involved in the planning of continuing safe operations during a global pandemic, which has been new, but other than a restriction on travelling to sites the day job has remained the same and after 3 months I think I've adapted pretty well!

### What's your favourite thing about working at px Group?

For me it has been the variety of the work I have been able to get involved in – I've been involved with the transfer of operations to px Group of all the sites we have and had in the portfolio; worked on major development projects both for px and other clients; worked in different countries; worked with some great people.

## QUICK-FIRE ROUND

**FIRST JOB:** Shop Assistant at Liptons when I was 14.

**FIRST CAR:** MG Metro

**FAVOURITE TV SHOW:** Jeremy Kyle Show

**BOOKS OR PODCASTS:** Books! In particular Ben Elton fiction

**FAVOURITE MUSIC (ARTIST/BAND):** Leonard Cohen

**FIRST HOLIDAY DESTINATION AFTER COVID-19:** Whitby

### Have you ever had a mentor in the industry? If so, what's the best bit of advice they've given you?

Not officially but I have worked for some great people who I have learnt from. My first boss, whilst a 'task master', always challenged me but also supported me brilliantly and gave me opportunities to develop. He always encouraged me to present myself with confidence and looking back I think this has paid off.

### What are some of the challenges that you have overcome during your career?

I don't think there's a specific situation that stands out at the moment as a challenge, but that's not to say the job is straightforward! I always say that if you work hard, you believe in your capabilities, and you're not afraid to ask questions or stand up for yourself, you'll be putting yourself in a good place to overcome things.

### What has been the highlight of your career to date?

I'm not a highlight type of person – but I've just been lucky enough to work in a job that I like doing, for a company that I enjoy doing it for and with people who I enjoy working with. That goes a long way to fulfilling job and career satisfaction.

### What's your top tip for women looking to get into the industry?

Give it a go – it might not be up there with being a footballer's wife, but it can make an interesting career. I didn't have a plan, but I followed my interests and grasped the opportunity which has given me a good career.

### How can the industry make itself more attractive to women?

In my experience, I don't particularly think it has to, but I suppose some would say differently. I personally didn't have a master plan to work in this industry, but what I did do was study an area that I was interested in and I was good at, and it has paid off by giving me a good career. Be prepared to work hard and demonstrate like anyone that you deserve your role on individual merit.