

WOMEN

IN SECURITY

Name

Sarah Hutchinson

Briefly explain your role

I am a KST Engineer however, I am contracted specifically to work for the West Yorkshire Police*, installing crime prevention alarm systems all over the county.

I have installed KST alarms for all sorts of victims of crime; from domestic violence to burglaries to witness protection. The job is very varied and different, which is why I am so proud of it!

I am the sole Engineer for WYP* therefore, alongside the installation of the alarms themselves, I also complete all administration and invoicing.



What do you love about your job?

The main aspects of my job that I love are that no two days are the same and I get to spend my whole working day helping people. Most of the customers I meet in my working day are vulnerable and really benefit from the alarm systems being installed – the gratitude I get for helping them is highly rewarding and one of the best feelings in the world.

How does KST empower you in your role?

I have been with KST since it was a family owned and run business. I started as a Service Coordinator and, after 3 years, I wanted to move and progress my career. I was offered to be put through an engineering course that I was instantly interested in.

Once I passed this, I was offered the West Yorkshire Police contract due to being the sole female Engineer at the company.

Therefore, KST have empowered me by giving me the opportunity to learn and work in a job I really enjoy.

What made you move in to the security sector?

I just found the opportunities and chances to work within this sector or, in a way, they found me!

I started as a cleaner at another security company in West Yorkshire. I was then offered a chance to progress into Sales and Administration due to having a typing qualification that I gained at school. From there, I worked my way up to running the whole department before moving to KST.

When I finished my engineering qualifications, I never looked back!

Has there been any significant barriers to progression in your career within the security profession?

No I have never found a progression barrier in my security career. I have got to where I want to be and love what I do!

How does KST help support your sense of purpose in your career?

KST have supported my sense of purpose within my role by providing managers who are supportive and accommodating with my working day. I work the usual office hours (9am – 5pm) but as my role is far from ordinary, I also must be available in the evenings for call outs. Because of this, it has benefitted me that my managers are flexible with the hours I work.

What's your most memorable moment in your career so far?

There are so many, and a huge number of moments have stuck with me whilst working within this role.

There are 200 alarms for WYP that are shared and reused around the whole of the West Yorkshire County. As you can imagine, I have seen a lot.

The more uplifting and satisfying moments in my role are when the criminals have been caught for their crimes because of the alarms I have installed.

I was asked to install an alarm system on a classroom Portakabin. There had been many break-ins by gangs and the police wanted the alarm system to notify the dog and helicopter teams. One night, the alarm was activated, and the dog department were called out – because of the quick response, 3 of the culprits were caught.



What opportunities does the security profession offer?

No two days are the same.

The role I have is very niche and unique. Not many people can or are able to do it. I am honoured by the fact that I was offered this opportunity, especially because they specifically needed a woman engineer for the WYP contract.

To me, this proves that women are needed in the security profession and are highly appreciated.

What would you say to any women who have reservations about how male- dominated the industry is, in order to put their minds at ease?

I don't class it as a male dominated industry anymore.

At 17 and 18, I gained all my qualifications to become a builder. That was my dream job. When I finished the course, I applied for over 50 job roles in the sector and heard nothing back. No one was willing to help kickstart my career because I was female. From this point, I started looking at moving to the USA to live as they were more forward-thinking when it came to female builders.

And then I found the Security Industry.

KST take pride in having a female Engineer. I believe there should be more women in this industry and my view is, go for it! It's not like it used to be at all.

How do you balance work and home responsibilities?

When my children were younger, I had to plan how to balance work and home responsibilities. School during the day helped a lot! However, I also had my neighbours who would help with the children when I was working. I had a great support system!

Now, it's just me and the dog – so I find balancing both easy.

Sign off your employee story with anything else you would like to add

My role is very unique and I thoroughly enjoy it. I love getting up on a morning knowing that I will be spending my day helping people. I live to work, it's a privilege!



Head Office

4 | St Dunstons Technology
Park | Bradford | BD4 7HH

Northern Office

Unit 6 Pickering House | Netherton
Road | Wishaw | ML2 0EG

Midlands Office

1 | Sapcote Trading Centre |
Cradley Heath | B64 5QR

Southern Office

12 | Progress Park | Ribocon
Way | Luton | LU4 9UR

