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# Insight

SUMMER 2017



**WIN!**

**AN iPad  
MINI**

# Taste of success

**The Prescot café with a difference**

## COMMUNITY

The burger bonanza hitting Worcester



## SPOTLIGHT

Manchester's baker rising to the occasion



# OUT & ABOUT

WITH  
INSIGHT  
EDITOR  
BEN HALL



Welcome to the Summer issue of *Insight*. This edition is jam packed with colourful examples of businesses making the most of their properties and I'm sure it'll leave you hungry for more.

We travelled up to the north east for this issue's tour (page 4), meeting some fascinating characters who build intricate model railways, as well as a family that has run two fantastic restaurants for more than half a century.

If that's not enough to whet your appetite, we also caught up with Rule of Tum (page 10), a gourmet Worcester burger restaurant in a burgeoning student hotspot. The chaps who run it are a great example of tenants who've identified an opportunity to expand their business with the support of Network Rail and their arch, so it's great to see them making a success of it.

## CONTACT US

If you have a story to tell or a question about the magazine

Email: drop us a line at [insight@abcomm.co.uk](mailto:insight@abcomm.co.uk)

Twitter: Join the conversation using our new Twitter handle @Insight\_NR

Call the editor: 020 7922 5687

And if you're ever near Prescott in Merseyside, make sure you stop off at the town's Station House café. Simon Foo is serving up some fantastic food from the old station master's house there and you can read about this and the catering service he runs on page 7.

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

Please rate this magazine. Text 'Rate Insight' with a number from 1 to 5, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent (e.g. Rate Insight 4) to 82055. Every response will be entered into a free prize draw to win a £25 Amazon voucher. Look out for the winner in the next issue.

Texts to this number are charged at your standard network rate. Your information will be treated confidentially and will not be shared with other organisations.



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# WALL SHOOK UP



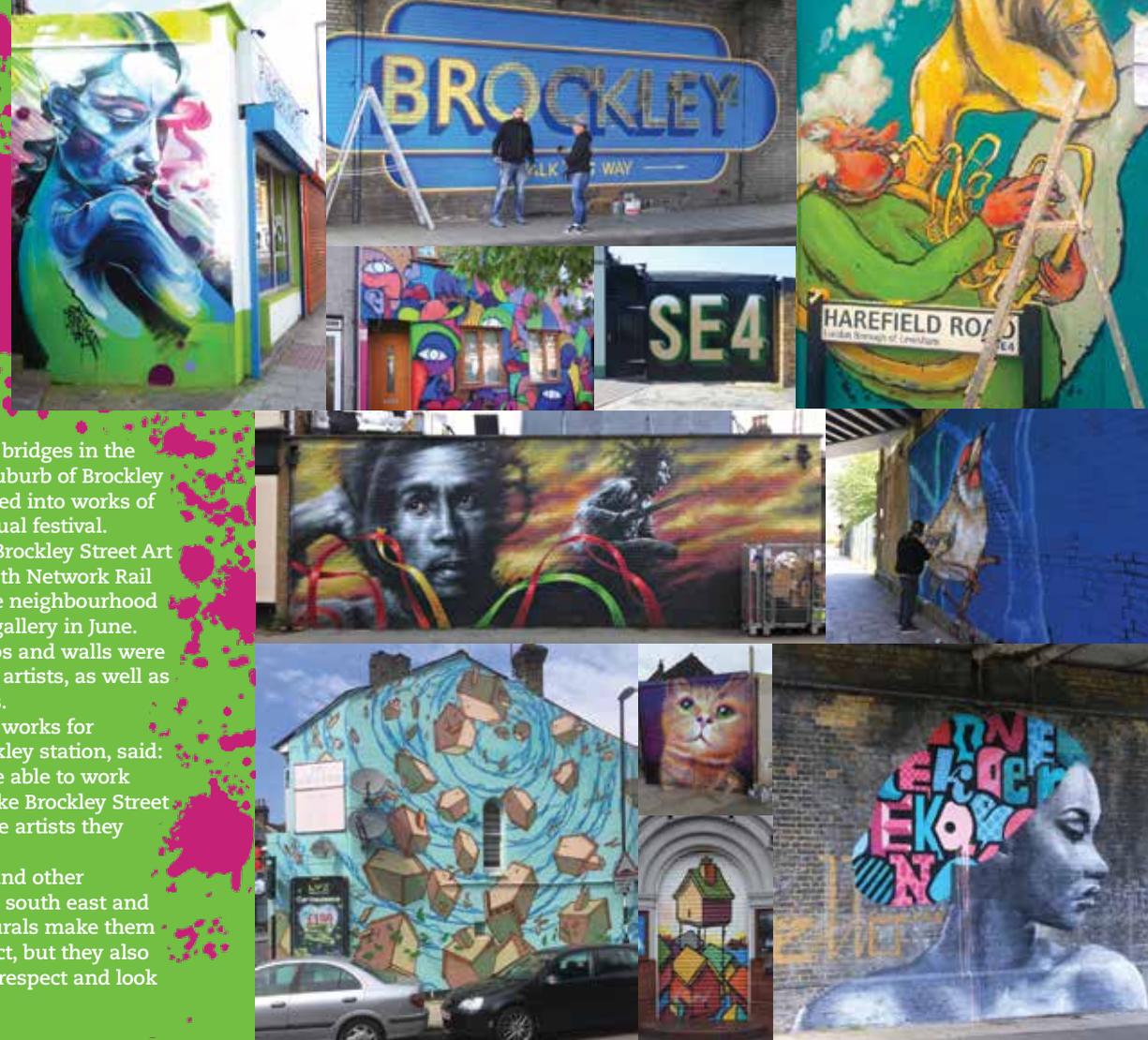
A number of railway bridges in the south east London suburb of Brockley have been transformed into works of art thanks to an annual festival.

The organisers of Brockley Street Art Festival partnered with Network Rail to help transform the neighbourhood into an open-air art gallery in June.

Local houses, shops and walls were painted by top street artists, as well as three railway bridges.

Eddie Burton, who works for Network Rail at Brockley station, said: "It's great for us to be able to work with organisations like Brockley Street Art and the incredible artists they attract.

"We own bridges and other structures across the south east and not only do these murals make them much nicer to look at, but they also encourage people to respect and look after them."



## NEWS IN BRIEF

▶ Network Rail's female engineers encouraged girls to follow in their footsteps when the organisation celebrated International Women in Engineering Day back in June.

The annual event aims to raise the profile and achievements of women in the engineering industry, as well as offering aspirational advice and examples to budding young female engineers.

▶ More than 1,500 potentially life-saving interventions have been carried out across Britain's rail network by rail staff, police and the public over the last year. The figure, up 40 per cent, is in large part due to suicide prevention measures put in place as part of a partnership between Samaritans, Network Rail, British Transport Police and the wider rail industry.

▶ Prime Minister Theresa May was on hand to officially open a new £4.5m railway siding in her constituency of Maidenhead in June. The sidings are part of Network Rail's ongoing Railway Upgrade Plan and will ease congestion on the railway, as well as increasing the number of electric, peak-time trains.



# NEWS

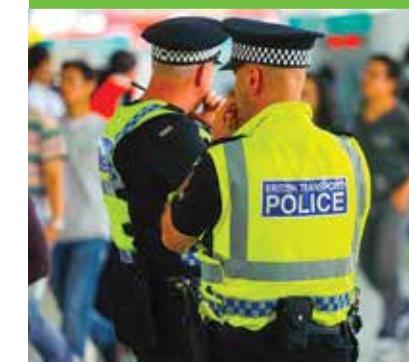


Train operating companies are working with the British Transport Police (BTP) to reduce workplace violence and protect rail staff wellbeing across the UK.

The BTP promises to arrest and prosecute those found guilty of assaulting rail staff, as well as potentially banning them from using rail services in the future.

The BTP has worked with rail companies to establish a Staff Safeguarding Group in north east England to increase rail staff confidence, reduce crime and disorder affecting staff safety, and improve awareness of assault and workplace intimidation.

For more information on how to protect yourself or report an offence, visit: <http://www.btp.police.uk/pdf/Working-to-prevent-offences-against-staff.pdf>





If you're running a business, your face has to be recognisable to your regulars



# A touch of class

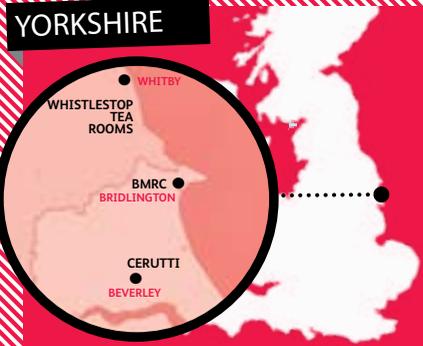
**The Cerutti family has pedigree.** Since 1958, it has been serving up some of the finest cuisine north of the Humber river at its two Cerutti restaurants. Cerutti 2 opened in the old station house of Beverley train station in 1989, helmed by the original restaurateurs' daughter Tina. The original restaurant still operates in Hull and offers customers a wide range of fish dishes, while Cerutti 2 opts for a trendy, modern menu.

Tina said: "Cerutti 2 backs on to the station platform, so it's a unique place for people. "We've been here so long that we're now serving three generations of regulars and word of mouth is our only form of advertising." Brother Tony is at the helm of the original Cerutti restaurant and both siblings share a fierce passion for the family business. She said: "We've always been careful to stick to our parents' standards of pride, loyalty and quality in what we do. "We're incredibly proud of the restaurants

and, even though we're best friends, there's still a sibling rivalry between us!" Since Cerutti 2 opened, the population of Beverley has almost tripled. Tina and the family have capitalised on this by creating a Cerutti Deli shop adjacent to Cerutti 2. "We sell some of what's on the restaurant menu as ready meals in order to give customers that fine dining experience at home too, and we also operate a successful outdoor catering company," said Tina. [www.ceruttis.co.uk](http://www.ceruttis.co.uk)



# Insight TOUR



COVERED: 60 MILES

- The Yorkshire pudding dates back to 1747
- Home to the oldest convent in England
- Sheffield FC was the first ever football club, formed in 1857

## 2014

Yorkshire hosted the Grand Départ of the Tour de France and is described as the 'grandest yet'

Whistlestop's menu has something for everyone



# All and sundry



If Gemma Lonsdale isn't elbow deep in Yorkshire pudding mix, you can be sure she'll be whipping up a fresh batch of scones or constructing a platter of sandwiches.

Life is hectic for Gemma and husband Paul at their Whistlestop café, attached to Whitby station. Their menu covers everything from savoury and sweet treats to full roast dinners.

"I grew up with my parents running a pub, so I'm used to cooking that sort of food and it felt like there was a place for larger meals in a café environment," said Gemma.

"We're well placed and get a real range of customers coming in; from older people who eat here every day to those who come for a couple of lunches per week, then there are train passengers."

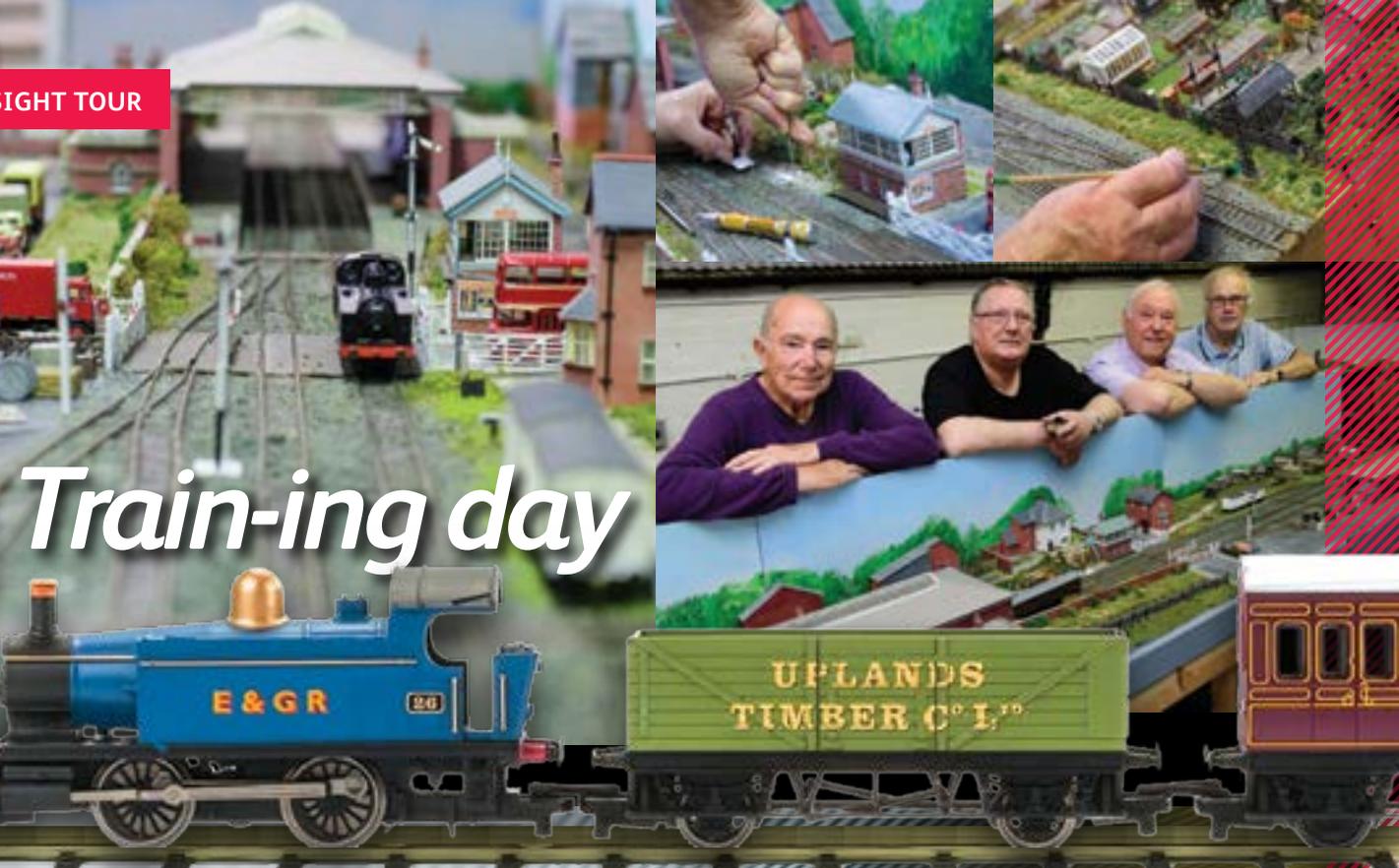
The café has also fostered a unique customer base on wheels – biker clubs.

"Whistlestop is very popular with motorcyclists and we stay open late on a Thursday night for them," said Gemma. "Now there are bikers that come from as far as Middlesbrough, Newcastle or York."

With 12 tables, a sofa and outdoor seating, there's plenty of room for everyone at the café. And while getting orders for scones alongside full roast dinners might be a challenge, it's one that Gemma and Paul continue to relish.

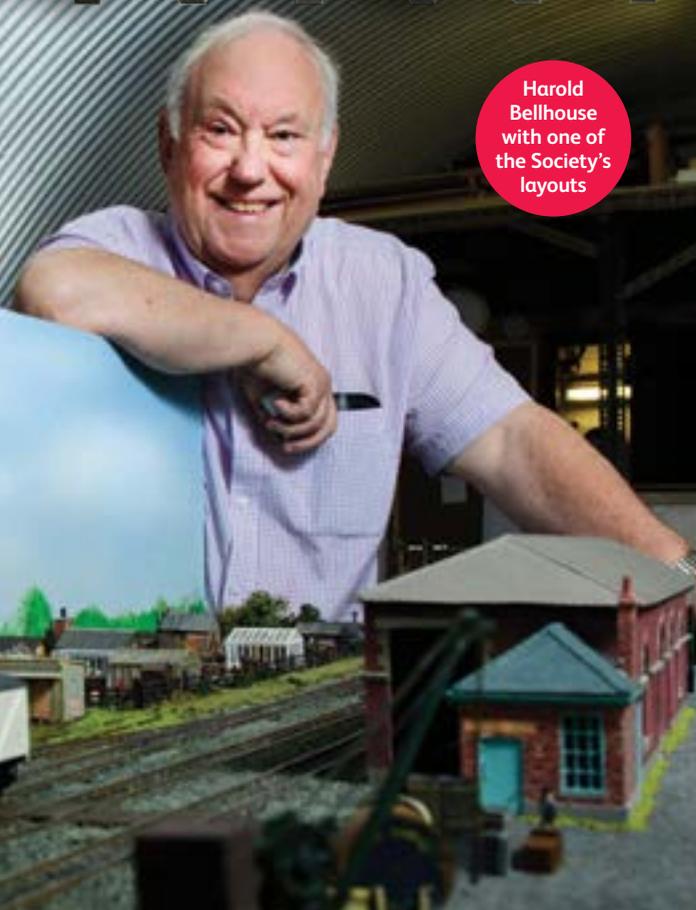


# Train-ing day



**#** Tucked away in an unassuming arch on the outskirts of Bridlington lies a world of miniature wonders. This cave of treasure is filled with intricate replicas constructed by Bridlington Model Railway Society. The group of 12 meets twice a week to work on a series of working model sets, all based on authentic UK locations. Harold Bellhouse said: "The layouts we build are often up to 35x30ft when fully assembled, so the empty arch is perfect for constructing them in modular form.

"We're working on three layouts at present and each one can take years to plan, design and build." The club counts carpenters, electricians and painters among its ranks, each of whom offer a unique skillset useful for different parts of the construction process. "There's immense satisfaction to be had throughout the process, from initial construction of the base to building the scenery, and from testing the rolling stock to actually inviting people to come and see it," said Harold. [www.bridrailmodellers.com](http://www.bridrailmodellers.com)



Harold Bellhouse with one of the Society's layouts

# MASTER OF TASTE

The old Station Master's House in Prescot has a new life as a coffee house and catering company

When chefs Carl Shore and Simon Foo founded Station Coffee House in 2016, they wanted it to be everything the big café chains weren't – unique, full of local character, and rich in heritage. They found the perfect place right next to Prescot station. Built in 1871, the former Station Master's House lay dormant for more than 50 years before Carl and Simon transformed it into the cosy café, bistro and food bar it is today. They pride themselves on serving nothing but fresh, good quality, locally-sourced food and drink that is all handmade on site. "We wanted to bring

something a bit different to the area," said Simon. "We have a really distinctive menu which we change seasonally to keep it fresh, and we get all our ingredients from local farmers and suppliers. "There are so many Costa and Starbucks shops around here, so we wanted to go down a completely different avenue. The old Station Master's House really gives the place its own identity." Keen to make the most of the premises and diversify their business, Simon and Carl also run a bespoke catering company called Vintage Thyme, serving British cuisine with a twist.

Their mouth-watering menu includes pork and black pudding scotch eggs, barbecued cedar wood-wrapped cod and chorizo skewers, and their signature corn beef hash cake. "We realised there was a niche market for a bespoke caterer in the area," said Simon. "When we started this whole thing we had no idea how we would do, but both the coffee shop and the catering side have done better than we could ever have hoped. We think it's quite an achievement!"



Station Coffee House has a unique offering





SPOTLIGHT

## Manchester bakery finds cult success

Being a business that's hard to find and having queues that snake down a street are often mutually exclusive, but for baker Chris Kelly they're key ingredients for success. Chris runs Pollen Bakery with his wife Hannah in Manchester. Tucked behind Piccadilly Station in an unassuming arch, the bakery has quickly established itself as the go-to place for quality loaves and pastries. And while the business has been running less than a year, a customer base bordering on the fanatic ensures it regularly sells out

of pastries before 9am and bread by early afternoon. "We're hidden away on a quiet street, so just finding us makes people feel like they've come somewhere special," said Chris. "When they get here, the whole arch is on view behind our counters, so as a customer you get a better idea of where your food comes from and how it's made." Everything produced by the bakery is organic, with a selection of sourdough and rye breads alongside an enticing menu of pastries, including a highly sought after cruffin, the flavour of which changes weekly. "The pastries seem to have really been the things that have gone crazy with

customers," said Chris. "We only hire skilled bakers and all of them serve on the counter too, so we're all able to answer questions about the products and offer advice on baking to customers." The bakery is open four days a week, from Wednesday to Saturday, and closes only when it sells out of food. "Many people come from nearby businesses, such as Virgin Trains or Network Rail, but there's no fixed demographic for our customer base," said Chris. "It's a real mix, but we get to know many of our regulars and their orders off by heart."

### Chris's ingredients for success:

- BRAND:** We came up with a strong idea of what we wanted our brand to represent, then worked with an independent designer who brought our ideas to life.
- ENDORSEMENTS:** Every time a food critic or blogger posts something about us, we get a new wave of customers from their readership. When we opened, we hosted a party for these kind of writers.
- SIMPLICITY:** We work long hours and don't have the time to meet with marketing people or sit at computers, so the only marketing we do is what we can do from our phones. We keep our website, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook all up to date with opening times and product updates.
- REFINE:** We are constantly developing what we do and how we do it to improve what we offer customers. This passion and effort is really appreciated by them and they can tell we are putting everything into this business.
- FRESH:** Everything is baked and sold on the day. Our pastries are made to be at their best for the minute we open at 8am.

Burger Shop hopes to lead the way in creating new foodie haven



# Tasty trailblazers



The rumble of trains overhead as customers tuck into locally sourced homemade burger and chips has become one of the main attractions at The Burger Shop in Worcester.

Beneath the arches of Cherry Tree Walk, the restaurant has quickly become a hit with locals who enjoy the historic setting as much as the menu.

And the team behind the eatery, which opened in April 2016, has high hopes the concept can kick-start an independent restaurant revolution among the arches.

Ed Kirk, owner and founder of A Rule of Tum – the company behind The Burger Shop, said: “The arch is a very stand-out and iconic building for a restaurant and in a small city like Worcester, it’s never been done before.

“We feel that once it catches on the area will carry on growing with more

people coming in and doing business. The image I have for it is to become an independent food and drink-led place.”

With the runaway success of the Worcester restaurant helping to rejuvenate a relatively undeveloped part of the city, Ed feels there is a big market for similar independent clusters setting up shop outside London.

“I think that these kind of things will start happening more as owners like myself realise their customers in all these small cities want a little bit of London.

“More and more people are also trying to support local businesses and buy local food and they don’t mind paying for it,” Ed said.

He thinks railway arches are well placed to help fuel independent destination areas as they offer such unique spaces for businesses.

Ed, his brother and head chef Dorian, and business

partner Jon Stead founded A Rule of Tum. Together with their team they run Worcester Burger Shop and its sister branch in Hereford, which opened in 2014, and also bar/restaurant The Bookshop.

And they have not ruled out taking on another of the Worcester arches themselves with a new restaurant concept.

“An arch is such a cool space you can’t go wrong really,” Ed said.

## From empty shell to bustling burger joint



Before moving into Arch 46, A Rule of Tum needed change of use permission, as it had previously been a carpet shop. With this secured, renovations began in January 2016.

The Burger Shop’s design is simple by necessity as the team had to work to specific parameters. Among these was the fact they could not fit radiators on the walls, so instead installed environmentally friendly under floor heating.

Having no gas connection meant the team had to power everything electrically, but this allowed them to install more green measures, including a ground source heat pump that generates hot water. The Burger Shop Worcester opened in April 2016.



The arch is a very stand-out and iconic building for a restaurant and in Worcester, it’s never been done before.

# SITE FOR SORE EYES

Paul Donnelly is a Site Manager who relishes the challenge of looking after hundreds of properties in the south west

**What does your job entail?** My role involves protecting the assets of Network Rail, which includes our property, land and tenants. It's my job to ensure a site is properly fit for what any business tenant wishes to do with it for their company. My area covers 308 sites in the south west from Worcester down to Penzance.

**What skills are important for the role?** Being a good communicator and a strong, reliable point of contact for tenants. I have helped a lot of people with refurbishments over time and we always have to ensure their sites remain compliant with the regulations of the railway infrastructure. The job also needs a person who can relate to a whole range of tenants, but never lose sight of the importance of safety for the railway, which is paramount.

**What's the best thing about the job?** The most rewarding thing about the job is refurbishing sites that create a real destination or hub for a place and community.

**What's your biggest challenge?** It's the volume of tenants. The sheer amount and the diversity of what goes on in these sites is vast and, although working with this variety is great, it's also challenging.

**Favourite place:** LLangennith in south Wales is my dream place. It's a fantastic beach that I use to surf with my son, Jacob, and it's a little-known World Heritage Site too.

**Top hobby:** Wild swimming with Jacob in the rivers Usk and Wye. I enjoyed it as a child and now my kids are enjoying it with me.

**What's your claim to fame?** I came 19th in the 2014 World Bog Snorkelling Championship, in Llanwrtyd Wells.



## ARE YOU A TEAM PLAYER? NAME THESE FOUR PREMIERSHIP FOOTBALL CLUBS FOR A CHANCE TO WIN!

Send your answers, with your name, place of work and contact number via email to [insight@abcomm.co.uk](mailto:insight@abcomm.co.uk) or tweet us @Insight\_NR. You can also post your answer to Insight editor, AB Publishing, Unit B, Gemini House, 180-182 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3TQ. Laura Berzina won an iPad Mini in the last issue.



**WIN!  
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