*June 2015 – for immediate release Further information: Chris Pockett, +44 1453 524133*

**Award-winning West Country female engineer calls for inspirational female engineers to step forward**

An award-winning young female engineer from the West Country is calling on her fellow female engineers to follow in her footsteps and enter a prestigious engineering award.

Lucy Ackland won the 2014 Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) Women’s Engineering Society (WES) Award as part of the Institution’s Young Woman Engineer of the Year Awards. She is today calling on her fellow young female engineers in Gloucestershire and around the UK to enter the 2015 awards which are open for entry. The awards aim to highlight to young girls that engineering is a diverse and exciting industry offering creative and challenging careers.

Lucy Ackland, a Project Manager in the Special Projects team within the Group Engineering Division of Renishaw plc in Gloucestershire, said: “Winning the WES Award was a real honour. Since my career started in 2004 I have always known the importance of encouraging more young people into the industry, especially but not exclusively, females.

“I have dedicated large portions of my time to supporting this. Winning the award has enabled me to take my story and my engineering engagement from a local to a national level, through radio, newspapers, magazines, websites and events.”

In Lucy’s role, she is involved in some very exciting research projects to do with both 3D printing and precision measurement.

Finding and celebrating the success of inspirational female role models is vital given that the UK currently has the lowest proportion of female engineering professionals in Europe at 6 per cent\*, compared to Latvia, Bulgaria and Cyprus with 30 per cent. A recent survey with parents of children aged 9-12 carried out by the IET also found that only 7 per cent of parents would encourage their daughters to become engineers.

If the lack of women in engineering continues, the UK will be in a significantly weakened position to find the 1.82 million people with engineering skills that employers are projected to need from 2012 - 2022 (according to Engineering UK).

The 2015 Young Woman Engineer of the Year Awards are all about raising the profile of today’s most impressive female engineers, celebrating their successes, and encouraging them to become role models to inspire the next generation of female engineers and help address the gender imbalance in engineering and science.

IET President-elect, Naomi Climer, said: “Engineering is a hugely exciting and diverse career with the opportunity to do something life- or world-changing. The Young Women Engineer of the Year awards, which have been running for 39 years, are all about finding role models to get girls – and young people in general - excited about the possibilities of an engineering career.”

The deadline for entry to the IET Young Woman Engineer of the Year awards is 26 June 2015. For more information, visit: www.theiet.org/ywe.

*\*IET Skills and Demand in Industry Survey, 2014*

**- ENDS –**

**Notes to editors:**

* Interview opportunities are available with IET spokespeople from a broad range of engineering and technology disciplines including cyber-security, energy, engineering skills, innovation, manufacturing, technology, transport and women in engineering.
* The IET is one of the world’s largest engineering institutions with nearly 160,000 members in 127 countries. It is also the most multidisciplinary – to reflect the increasingly diverse nature of engineering in the 21st century. Energy, transport, manufacturing, information and communications, and the built environment: the IET covers them all.
* The IET is working to engineer a better world by inspiring, informing and influencing our members, engineers and technicians, and all those who are touched by, or touch, the work of engineers.
* We want to build the profile of engineering and change outdated perceptions about engineering in order to tackle the skills gap. This includes encouraging more women to become engineers and growing the number of engineering apprentices.
* For more information, visit www.theiet.org
* Follow the IET on Twitter.