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PRESS RELEASE

03/09/2007



First Female President Of IStructE Takes Office For Centenary Year

Sarah Buck, of BSW Consulting (Exeter), will become the Institution of Structural Engineers' (IStructE) 88th and first female president. She will take office on 4th October 2007 and her presidential session will coincide with the Institution's Centenary year.

On becoming the first woman president of IStructE, Sarah will also become the first woman president of any of the construction industry's main international institutions. No stranger to firsts, Sarah was also the first girl from her high school to read engineering at university, and was elected as the first female member of the Institution's Council in 1983.

Sarah will outline her fresh perspective for IStructE in her inaugural address, entitled 'Our Centenary and Beyond: Attract, Support, Enthuse'. This will celebrate the Institution's distinguished heritage while looking ahead to its role for the next 100 years. Sarah's objectives for IStructE are to attract the best people into the profession; support IStructE members and the wider construction industry; and enthuse the general public with passion and appreciation for the value of structural engineering.

Inauguration as IStructE President will top an exceptional year for Sarah. Earlier in 2007 she won the Award for Outstanding Achiever in the Civil Engineering category at the recent Atkins Inspire Awards, a new awards event aimed at recognising and rewarding exceptional women working in the UK built environment.

2007 also saw the successful launch of IStructE's new Technician grade of membership, which Sarah had a lead role in developing and driving forward. The new grade includes structural engineering technicians in IStructE's membership base for the first time and implementing it has been a huge achievement. The first technicians are due to be elected shortly.

Sarah remarked on her forthcoming presidency: 'During my tenure as the first female president of IStructE in its Centenary year, I will use the opportunity to promote engineering as an interesting, challenging and rewarding career for all, and in particular, for women.'

Keith Eaton, Chief Executive of IStructE commented: 'I am delighted to welcome Sarah Buck as our new president. Through her passion for engineering and vision for the future, she will guide the Institution into a new era, which is particularly apt as we enter our next 100 years.'

- ENDS -
316 words

Notes for editors:

1. About Sarah Buck

Sarah was the first pupil to study engineering from Stafford Girls High School. She achieved a First Class Honours Exeter University in 1971, which was followed by a year of post graduate research in medical engineering in 1974. She became a Chartered Civil Engineer (Member) in 1980 and a Chartered Structural Engineer in 1982 (Member, and Fellow in 1997).

Sarah started her own business as a sole trader 1993, and co-founded BSW Consulting where she is currently a director in 1996 in Exeter, expanding the business over the past 11 years. She has been involved in the design and supervision of a wide range of civil and structural projects over her 30 year career, and has a particular interest in historic structures and sustainable construction; BSW currently has a sustainability initiative to make their office carbon-neutral.

Sarah's recent work has included the new Children's Hospice near Bristol, a major study and remedial works at Mullion Harbour in Cornwall, a major refurbishment of a listed building and extensions to many schools. Other projects have included schools, flats, offices, leisure centres, hotels, banks, airports, drainage schemes and land fill sites. Whilst most of her work has been based around the UK's South West, there have also been overseas projects including Mmabtho airport in Southern Africa, a new 15km long sewerage scheme for Negril in Jamaica, and roads in Southern Africa.

Sarah has long been actively involved in IStructE. She was elected as the first woman Council member in 1983, and is a past chairman of the Devon and Cornwall branch. She was awarded IStructE's Lewis Kent Award in 2001, which is awarded for personal services by a member to the Institution or the profession. She also played a key role in introducing the new membership grade of Technician (launched in February 2007) and the Institution's first business plan. She is now the President elect of IStructE and the first woman in this role.

Sarah is also involved in the wider construction industry. She is a member of South West Women in Construction, who actively promote construction as a career for girls, and is a past member of the civil engineering advisory board of Exeter College. Sarah got married in 1972 and has two children (Adam 1983, Matthew 1986). She has played hockey at club level for over 25 years and as well as at county level for a couple of years. She is interested in walking, having completed the Pennine Way and Offa's Dyke long distance walks, sculpture, travel, reading, gardening and falconry.

2. About the Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE)

IStructE is the world's leading professional body for structural engineering. It is the

appropriate source of relevant and considered opinion on all structural engineering and public safety issues in the built environment.

The Institution has some 22,000 members in 105 countries around the world, and is recognised internationally for the technical and professional competence of its members. Its image is one of safety, efficiency and excellence both of its operations and in the standards of its members. The Institution qualifies its members by assessing their professional competence in structural engineering.

Formed at the Ritz Hotel, London on 21 July 1908, IStructE will celebrate its Centenary between October 2007 and December 2008 with events and other activities that honour the work of structural engineers and the vital contribution they make to society and the built environment. For more information, please visit istructe.org/centenary.

3. More information

For more information, photography or any other enquiries please contact Joe Jennings in the IStructE press office on +44 (0)20 7201 9104 or joe.jennings@istructe.org.