

**Media invite/photo opportunity – Celebrating 90 years of the Tyne Bridge and the pioneering lady who helped to create it**

**When:** Wednesday, 10 October, 12.30 pm (photo at 12.45 pm)

**What:** More than 90 female civil engineers from across the UK will gather on Gateshead’s quayside in the shadow of the Tyne Bridge, to mark its 90th birthday and honour the female engineer behind its construction.

A photo opportunity will take place at 12.45 pm when the engineers will be grouped for a picture with the Tyne Bridge in the background.

**Where:** Sage Gateshead (main entrance on the Tyne Bridge side)

**Media contact:** Tegan Chapman, ICE, 07584 235824.

**Details:**

Tyneside’s most notable landmark, the Tyne Bridge, celebrates its 90th birthday this week (Wednesday, 10 October). To mark the occasion, more than 90 female civil engineers from across the UK will gather at Sage Gateshead to honour the woman who was active in the iconic bridge’s construction.

The event, which takes place on the 90th anniversary of the bridge’s historic, ceremonial opening by King George V in 1928, has been organised by the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) in partnership with Northumbria University, Newcastle.

It will celebrate Dorothy Buchanan, the first female member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, and a member of the Dorman Long team that worked on the Tyne Bridge in the late 1920s.

Dorothy was a pioneer of her time, joining the Institution in 1927. In addition to her contribution to the Tyne Bridge, she also served as part of the team for the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Lambeth Bridge in London.

Thousands of women have since followed in her engineering footsteps to carve out successful careers, and the Institution of Civil Engineering currently has more than 8,000 female members, worldwide.

The ‘Women in Engineering’ event on 10 October will also see the launch of a longitudinal research project by Northumbria University and the ICE, to track the career progression of 200 female and 200 male civil engineers at three-year intervals.

The survey aims to gather invaluable and unique insights into how women and men prosper in the profession. It also hopes to identify any barriers to progression and show that civil engineering is a career for everyone.

Regional director of the ICE North East, Penny Marshall, said: “The North East has very strong connections to civil engineering and we are delighted to be celebrating not only the Tyne Bridge’s 90th anniversary, but also Dorothy’s contribution to the creation of such an iconic structure.

“Talking about female engineers from the past and the present helps young women today see that STEM careers are not only achievable, but also desirable.”

Vikki Edmondson, Senior Lecturer in Civil Engineering at Northumbria University, helped to organise the Women in Engineering event. She is a Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineering and her civil engineering career spans 24 years, starting as a technician in a local authority and working her way through college and university to become a Chartered Engineer, 15 years ago.

Vikki added: “Women have carved out successful careers in civil engineering for decades now, as is exemplified by Dorothy Buchanan’s contribution to the creation of the Tyne Bridge, 90 years ago. We want to celebrate the contribution and impact that female engineers continue to make in the field and reaffirm that engineering is a profession open to anyone, regardless of gender.”

**Ends**

Monday 8 October 8, 2018

**Notes to editors**

The Women in Engineering event includes workshops, speakers and lunch, which will follow the Tyne Bridge photo opportunity.

Fact file: The Tyne Bridge – celebrating 90 years

* Work began on the Tyne Bridge in August 1925 and it took three years to complete the structure
* It was formally opened by King George V and his wife Queen Mary on 10 October 1928
* It was the largest single-span steel arch bridge in Britain at the time of its construction
* It is built from steel and Cornish granite
* The bridge was built using shipbuilding techniques, with rivets and panels which were welded together
* The stonework on the towers wasn’t fully completed until 1929
* Its total cost at the time of building was £1.2 million
* It was originally painted green with special paint made by J. Dampney Co. of Gateshead.
* The Tyne Bridge was considered to be a major engineering triumph of its time, and remains a standout piece of engineering and design, 90 years on.
* In August 2018 it was upgraded to a Grade II Listed Structure by Historic England.

**Engineering at Northumbria University, Newcastle**

Northumbria University is ranked in the world top-300 for Engineering and Technology in the Times Higher Education's World University subject rankings 2018.

It achieved 88% overall student satisfaction for our programmes in the National Student Survey 2017.

It has a top-35 Engineering research department with 79% of our outputs ranked world-leading or internationally excellent in the latest UK wide research assessment exercise (Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014, UoA15), placing us in the top quartile for world-leading publications among UK universities in General Engineering.

The Faculty attracts students from around the world, including China, India, Pakistan and the Middle East, with collaborative ventures in teaching with China and Malaysia and strong international research collaborations across Europe, Africa, Asia and the USA.

ICE North East

ICE North East supports over 2,000 members, living and working in Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham and Tees Valley.

It shares knowledge, influences public infrastructure policy, and encourages innovation and excellence in the civil engineering profession. ICE North East also aims to raise the profile of civil engineering by working with the media, schools and universities. To find out more, visit [www.ice.org.uk](http://www.ice.org.uk)