

Katherine Bruce, graduated from the School of Manufacturing and Mechanical Engineering with upper second class degree (2.1) in 1999.

After leaving Birmingham University I joined Jaguar Cars on their graduate scheme and through this progressed to a Project Engineer working on vehicle safety components development such as airbags and safety sensing systems. I was transferred to Land Rover when Ford bought this company and helped the two sister departments share best practices as well as manage the Passenger Airbag on the restyled Discovery. During this time I also gained my Charter Engineer status with the IMechE.

However, my passion was really yachts and living in the Midlands was not helping this aspect so I became a superyacht engineer. Basically living aboard yachts bigger than 100foot (33m) and maintaining all the mechanical, electrical and electronic systems onboard (generators, engines, sewage plants, watermakers, aircon, entertainment systems, ovens etc). I am now working alongside a 43m sailing yacht using my project management skills as a Refit Project Coordinator – after 8 years of being at sea and travelling the world I am trying to build a more shorebased lifestyle. My proudest project was the refit of the iconic J Class Sailing Yacht “Endeavour” which was the UK’s 1934 entry in to the America’s Cup. I was based in New Zealand for two and half years and then sailed away with her for a further year as the sole engineer onboard. We won two international awards for the refit: the International Superyacht Society Design Award for Refit 2012 and the World Super Yacht Awards Best Refit 2013 and then the first regatta race series we took her to – St Barth’s Bucket 2012.



Engineer Katherine Bruce in the engine room of Endeavour during the refit

These projects are very busy with huge amounts of time, money and people involved as every aspect has something custom and every yacht strives to be made and work perfectly.

The people you meet in this industry are a broad cross section of society from the guys sweeping up in the welding shop to the billionaire owners – there is never a dull day!