A Message from HRH The Princess Royal, the IMA Patron for 2014

I am delighted to be the Patron of the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications (IMA) in its 50th Anniversary year. This is not the first occasion in which my family has been involved with the Institute: His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh was President from 1976 to 1977, and the Institute was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1990.

In 1964 the founders of the IMA created a learned society to support mathematics and provide professional status for mathematicians, with membership open to those working in academia, commerce, industry and education. Over the ensuing 50 years it has contributed to many developments in mathematics and provided professional support and services to mathematicians.

The importance of mathematics in a technological society cannot be understated. It has provided solutions to problems in many subject areas, such as signal processing, fluid mechanics, coding and cryptography, ballistics, operational research and safety systems. In recent years there have been great advances in the computation, modelling and numerical methods required for designing today’s complex systems. Mathematics has also proved to be an invaluable tool for medical research into diseases, and in the design of equipment to assist people with disabilities. It has underpinned the science, engineering and technology developments that we enjoy today in diverse areas such as communications, transport, aerospace, navigation, construction, defence, meteorology, surveillance, safety and public health.

The IMA has always sought to work with other organisations to achieve its objectives. It has supported widening participation in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) community through its involvement with the Higher Education STEM programme. It actively participates in Big Bang Science and Engineering Fairs, as well as engaging with government through the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee and other bodies. The IMA also provides grants to members of the mathematics community to facilitate research activity. It is also a member of Science Council and continues to work cooperatively to promote science, including mathematics.

I would like to congratulate the IMA on its many achievements over the last 50 years, and I look forward to its further achievements in the future.

HRH The Princess Royal