

OBE FOR ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL COASTAL MANAGER

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The Isle of Wight Council's Coastal Manager, Dr Robin McInnes, has been awarded an OBE in HM the Queen's New Years Honours List.

Dr McInnes, who has worked for Isle of Wight local authorities since 1972, was awarded the OBE for "chairmanship of the Coastal Defence Groups of England and Wales and services to coast protection". Dr McInnes worked for the Isle of Wight County Council from 1972 until 1987 and as Deputy Borough Surveyor and subsequently Borough Surveyor of South Wight Borough Council until local government reorganisation in 1995. On the creation of the Unitary Authority he was appointed as Coastal Manager for the Isle of Wight.

Dr McInnes is a chartered civil engineer and geologist and is a Fellow of both the Institution of Civil Engineers and the Geological Society of London. In 1996 he established the Isle of Wight Centre for the Coastal Environment within the Engineering Services Department of the Isle of Wight Council. This provided a focus for addressing the serious problems facing the Isle of Wight coastline in terms of coastal erosion and landslip, particularly in the context of potentially worsening situations arising from the predicted impacts of climate change; the Centre celebrates its tenth anniversary this year.

Specialising in coastal and landslide management, Dr McInnes has published more than forty technical papers in these fields and has also written eleven books about the Isle of Wight. These have included the Book of the Solent which he edited jointly with Maldwin Drummond, former Commodore of the Royal Yacht Squadron, and this summer he will be publishing a major new work entitled The Book of the Isle of Wight Coast.

Dr McInnes has been actively involved in coastal and geotechnical issues at an international level and has advised the United Nations, the European Commission and the Council of Europe on landslide-related problems. He has chaired the Coastal Defence Groups of England and Wales for the last five years and has been Technical Chairman of the Standing Conference on Problems Associated with the Coastline (SCOPAC) since 1995. A particular interest has been management of the Ventnor Undercliff, which is the largest urban landslide complex in north-western Europe. In partnership with the European Commission and the government he has published non-technical advice and guidance for decision-makers in relation to both coastal issues and management of ground instability problems. Dr McInnes said: "I am honoured and delighted to have received the award of an OBE. This reflects the enormous support I have received from my technical colleagues within the Isle of Wight Centre for the Coastal Environment and more widely within the Isle of Wight Council. It would not have been possible to attract investment for major coast protection schemes as well as research without ongoing support from elected members over many years".

Councillor Andy Sutton, Leader of the Isle of Wight Council, said: "Robin McInnes is recognised as a specialist in the fields of coastal and landslide management at an international level. I am delighted that he has been honoured in this way. Robin and his team have been solely responsible for drawing in European funding not only to the Island but to the UK. This valuable contribution to the Island will continue to be fully supported by the new administration at County Hall".