

Rob Mahoney FRICS



The UK geospatial and surveying professions were saddened to learn of the death of Rob Mahoney FRICS on Fri 17th Jan after a lengthy battle with cancer. Rob was that rare thing, a true trailblazer in his profession, someone who seemed to fill every day of his life with activity and one who reached out to others and offered support and mentoring (myself included) for many. His term as Honorary Secretary 2010 – 2014 (HonSec, Rob was the last before the position was restructured in 2016) of RICS and a member of RICS Governing Council being a case in point. HonSec was a ‘bulwark’ RICS position, in many ways a direct line to and from the entire RICS membership and required a special kind of personality to fulfil the role in all its aspects.

Rob was neverendingly kind, understanding and as befits his experience at the sharp end of a rugby pack, Rob had played to a remarkably high level in his youth and had the ears to prove it, very robust when he needs to be. There was a steel to Rob that underpinned his willingness to listen to all opinions and an innate sense of diplomacy that would prove valuable for RICS and the growth of the geospatial profession.

Rob was part of a cohort of geospatial/geomatics innovators who entered the profession just as it’s witnessed a technological revolution with the advent of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and started its development from its roots in traditional land surveying and mapping. The early 1990’s saw the integration of GIS across a wide swath of utility and central/local government applications and Rob was at the forefront of this advance.

Rob also worked internationally, where his language and technical skills (Rob was a fluent French speaker) sparked an ongoing interest in land administration and cadastre. Rob worked with Prof Peter Dale and Dr Robin McClaren on a ground breaking initiative

in post-soviet Hungary in the mid-1990s. Rob also became involved with FIG [FIG - International Federation of Surveyors](#), becoming a central part of the RICS FIG delegation and contributing to the work of Commission 3 (GIS) in particular. Rob was also a great supporter of the RICS relationship with CLGE [CLGE - Council of European Geodetic Surveyors](#) and was the RICS representative at numerous CLGE general assemblies over the years. I know that our CLGE colleagues remember Rob with fondness, again his diplomacy and love for European culture and language (and of course food and wine, Rob was quite a gourmand) helped keep the relationship between our organisations strong.

Rob was also chair of the RICS Geomatics Faculty Board (Divisional Council) from 2002 – 04, chaired multiple conferences and evening lectures, was the author and co-author of several RICS, FIG publications and journal articles.

After retirement in the mid 2010's, Rob kept his engagement by chairing the International Land Management Standard group (ILMS) and my last official engagement with Rob was the launch of ILMS Turkish edition at CLGE Istanbul 2019. As always Rob was effortless in his presentation skills. I was lucky to know Rob both as a professional mentor and as a friend. Rob was involved in his local town (Lewes) and was a keen 'Morris dancer' amongst much more. We also shared a love of the sea, Rob would often take the opportunity to sea swim when we attended international events, a dip in an icy Baltic during a Helsinki conference sticks in the memory and was a keen sea paddle boarder until his final months.

RICS sends our sincere condolences to Rob's family (Jean and his children, grandchildren), the profession has lost a very great professional surveyor, but we were lucky to have him in the first place.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam

James Kavanagh 24/01/25