

**Commander C M O'Neill Royal Navy
Commanding Officer HMS Montrose**

Conor O'Neill was educated at King's College School, Wimbledon and joined the Royal Navy in 1999 as a University Cadet (Warfare). After a year of training, he went up to Wadham College, Oxford in October 2000 to read for a degree in Modern History and Politics. At the end of his final year he was sponsored by the Hudson Trust to complete a year of historical research into Irish republican terrorism, leading to a Master of Studies degree in 2004.

Joining HMS Liverpool as a Bridge Watchkeeper in 2005, she deployed first on Atlantic Patrol Task (South) and then to the Baltic Sea in support of a state visit by Her Majesty the Queen. Following Fleet Navigating Officer's Course in 2007, he joined first HMS Cumberland covering her exit from refit, then HMS Chatham, which deployed to the Arabian Gulf in 2008 on Operation TELIC, as the flagship for the RN Command of Combined Task Force 158 in the Northern Arabian Gulf.

Having returned to the UK, he served on the staff of Flag Officer Sea Training (Mine Warfare and Patrol Vessels) as a navigation sea-rider before assuming Command of HMS Tracker and Oxford URNU in September 2009. There followed 18 rewarding months training regular and reserve officers, as well as building the RN's links with the academic community. A particular highlight was the summer of 2010 when he acted as Commander Task Unit for the first P2000 deployment to Gibraltar since 1997. Promoted to Lieutenant Commander in October 2011, he assumed Command of the Faslane Patrol Boat Squadron and HMS Pursuer on UK force protection duties. Following PWO training the following year, he joined HMS Somerset in July 2013, deploying on Op KIPION in January 2014, the first KIPION escort to deploy with a Maritime Unmanned Aerial System, and then completed a period as the UK's duty Towed Array Patrol Ship.

He joined the Defence Engagement Strategy staff in the Ministry of Defence in November 2014 as a desk officer in the Strategic Plans team. Highlights there included taking the UK-US Strategic Effects and Force Alignment Board from pilot study to reality, the development of Defence Engagement doctrine, and policy support to the 2015 SDSR. Returning to sea in April 2016, he assumed Command of MCM 2 Crew 1, first in HMS Quorn and then HMS Hurworth, commencing their generation for Op KIPION. Selected for promotion to Commander and further Sea Command in July 2016, he enjoyed a short tour in the South Atlantic in Command of the Falkland Islands Patrol Vessel, HMS Clyde, towards the end of the Austral Winter, patrolling both the Falkland Islands and South Georgia. He assumed Command of HMS Montrose In April 2017 At The Start Of Her Generation From Upkeep.