

Obituary - Peter Howells



By Janet Cooper OBE

All of us in the share plan world are saddened by the passing of Peter Howells. In many respects he was larger than life, a man of firm views with encyclopaedic knowledge on many things, creative, fun, and always planning ahead. When I last saw Peter a few weeks ago he was planning ahead as ever, going to Portugal, ideas for his business, and time with his grandson, Samuel, his "best friend"

I first met Peter in the early 90s. It was at an industry dinner and we were sat next to each other. I heard about his career in the army, the Royal Engineers, and his career in stockbroking before founding Howells. He had seen a gap in the market where companies needed software to help them manage their employee and executive share plans. He created **Howells Associates** as a software company, as well as a service provider, for companies to outsource their share plan administration.

Howells was certainly ahead of the game. One of my clients - Northern Foods - was one of Peter's first clients, and the company secretary at the time was amazed that work which had taken many days for his secretary was done in minutes using Howells software. It was the first of many blue-chip clients.

Peter loved sailing and he was very generous in introducing his clients and business friends to sailing with day trips from the Hamble. Peter and his wife Anne would entertain us royally for a day trip out to Cowes on the Isle of Wight during summer. His last boating trip was in the autumn last year - photograph of Peter and Samuel, courtesy of Bill Cohen, who met up with him whilst Peter was on the Norfolk Broads.



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Peter loved to spend the start of the year in Portugal - 'the Portugal Office' - and was also generous in inviting clients and business friends to visit him there. I wasn't lucky enough to get out there, but I know many people enjoyed a visit to the "Portugal office".

At that dinner when we met in 1992, Peter and I came up with the idea of creating a group of practice heads across all aspects of share plans, and parliamentarians who would meet regularly at the Houses of Parliament. The **Share Schemes Advanced Studies Group** was founded, with Peter setting up the meeting every quarter from 1992 right up until Covid hit. Peter loved the lively debates in our meetings, and over dinner at the House of Commons, and he always enjoyed going on to the Terrace at the House of Commons to 'take in the air' (have a cigarette)! Andrew Jones MP was our gracious host in recent times.

ProShare recognised Peter's contribution to our industry in December 2019 with a huge honour - the ProShare '*Services to Employee Share Ownership*' Award.

Peter was a huge character, full of ideas and enthusiasm for business, and he will be missed very much by his clients and many friends.

He had been ill for some time, and he died peacefully at home on 4th April, leaving his wife Anne, and two children, Jennifer and Christopher, and a much beloved grandson, Samuel.

Should anyone want to make a donation in Peter's memory, his family have asked for donations to be made to [the RNLI](#).



Peter with Janet and friends at the House of Commons