

## **Dr Malcolm Peter Blackwell**

Dr Malcolm Peter Blackwell, (Malc to his family and friends, Malcolm to his work colleagues at Sequani), sadly passed away on 26<sup>th</sup> June. He had been diagnosed some years previously with a rare cancer. It's telling that even during this most challenging period, Malcolm remained positive and contributed to the furtherance of medical knowledge just as he had done throughout his career by joining a clinical trial run by the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham which showed initial promise.

Malcolm climbed the ranks the hard way, completing all of his further and higher education part-time whilst working at Safeparm. He began his career as an animal technician working at both the Universities of Birmingham and Leicester. As a study supervisor at Safeparm he completed his BSc in Biological Sciences at Trent Polytechnic. With a young family, it required persistent focus and many late nights to achieve his PhD in 1999 from the University of Derby which reflected his interest in respiratory sensitisers. By this time, he was Head of Repeat-Dose and Inhalation Toxicology at Safeparm and the successful PhD submission saw him promoted to Director of Mammalian Toxicology.

His broadening leadership skills led him to support the design and fund raising for a multi-species facility in Malaysia and it was from that role that he spring-boarded into Sequani as Director of Science. He continued his service in the CRO world joining Covance (now LabCorp) before returning to Sequani as Chief Scientific Officer in 2015.

There is a clear theme through all of the comments we have had about Malcolm in recent weeks. He was generous with his knowledge and his time to every person who came to see him. He supported animal technicians starting out in their career as unfailingly as he supported Toxicologists and Senior Scientists. He never wore his own knowledge and experience arrogantly, taking genuine pleasure in other people's achievements as if they were his own. Preferring not to hog the limelight, his contribution was always considered but his convictions were deeply held and he could turn his mind to an impressive array of issues without appearing to miss a step. For these reasons, he was universally respected and liked.

Outside of work, he was a committed outdoor person running a smallholding. We all lived through the ups and downs of lambing season with him although he dealt with this with his usual aplomb and you wouldn't have known that he'd been up half the night tending to the animals. He was a talented wildlife photographer and his pictures from safari adorned his office. We always saw the gravitas and consummate professionalism at work little knowing that it concealed a heavy rocker and a whisky lover at heart.

Those who worked with him have lost a mentor and a role model. The industry has lost a tireless advocate for rigorous and ethical toxicology studies. His family has lost a devoted husband, father and grandfather. Malcolm is already, and will continue to be, missed.