In recent times Peter Alan Ltd has been crowned the Best Lettings Agent in Wales by The Sunday Times for three consecutive years, and also the Best Estate Agent in Wales for four consecutive years.

Older readers will easily recall that in the post war years it was still possible to buy a small house for under a thousand pounds; those who bought in the 1960s will remember that a couple of thousand could secure a sound home, whilst in the late 1970s ten thousand pounds would buy a house. How much are they worth now? For fifty years local people have been using the services of Peter Alan to buy and sell their homes.

Peter Alan Ltd of Cardiff is one of the largest and best known estate agents in South Wales. Despite its name there never was a person called Peter Alan. The business was founded in 1965 by partners Alan Latham and Peter Mulchay who joined their first names together to form their business title. Though it once had only its two partners on its payroll, today the estate agent has over 200 employees.

When Peter Alan started in 1965, it operated from 9 Cathedral Road, though soon afterwards a branch in Queen Street opened in 1966. Three years later, in 1969, new offices were opened in Talbot Green, Cowbridge and Bridgend.

By the late 1970s Peter Alan had some 14 branches, but in 1980 the two founders decided to end their partnership and divide the business between them. Each partner took seven branches, with Alan Latham retaining the Peter Alan Ltd trading name.

Above: Recent accolades awarded to the firm. Below: Peter Alan’s first property showroom which opened in 1966.
Progress became the order of the day. The business became the first estate agent to open seven days a week. And female staff were engaged for the first time too - though not without agreeing to adhere to a strict dress code: no trousers, no high heels and no perfume!

The year 1985 also saw Peter Alan Ltd enter into an association with Parkhurst estate agents of Swansea. Two years later that association would lead to a formal merger of the two businesses. Not long afterwards the newly enlarged Peter Alan Ltd was sold to the Principality Building Society.

Peter Alan took a big technical step in 2000, as the company became fully computerised and then in 2008 the entire network was electronically linked for the first time.

During 2003 Peter Alan lettings was launched, with a main base in Cardiff City Centre. Due to the increasing demand Peter Alan rolled out lettings to the entire branch network overnight in 2009.

PA Legals was launched in 2005 and was soon followed by a Land & New homes division in 2006. Peter Alan Auctions was launched in 2009, rebranded the following year as All Wales Auction in partnership with Williams and Goodwin in North Wales.

2011 saw the launch of pa black with a new office in St David’s 2 shopping centre in Cardiff, the ‘Distinctive’ homes division provides enhanced marketing solutions for executive and individual homes. Due to its successful launch an additional pa black office was opened in Monmouth later in 2011 and during 2014 this has now been expanded across a number of South Wales locations including all of the company’s existing offices in Cardiff.

In 2014, Peter Alan Ltd was purchased by the Connells Group. The Connells Group is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Skipton Building Society and has 486 branches in the UK. It is the UK’s second largest agent and was established in 1936. The Connells Group is by most measures the most successful agent in the UK.

Today, under its Managing Director Andrew Barry, who started with the company in 1990 as a trainee negotiator in the Caerphilly office, with its head office in Culverhouse Cross, Cardiff, Peter Alan is one of South Wales’ largest estate and letting agencies with no fewer than 26 branches, including seven in Cardiff – dual-branded Peter Alan and ‘pa black’.

As Peter Alan celebrates its 50th year in 2015, they are proud to be a company that still provides service with a personal touch.

*Top left: Another property sold by Peter Alan. Below: A familiar sight to the people of South Wales, one of the company’s distinctive property showrooms.*