

Former Edinburgh University student and Edinburgh MP gets peerage

It is announced from Downing Street that "The Queen has been graciously pleased to signify Her intention of conferring a Peerage of the United Kingdom for Life upon the Rt Hon Michael Ancram."

Biographical Details

Michael Ancram was born in 1945. He was educated at Ampleforth College; Christ Church, Oxford (MA) and Edinburgh University (LLB), and was called to the Scottish Bar in 1970 and practised until 1979.

He has been a company director to several companies including industrial (paper), Corporate Communications (Chairman) and parliamentary consultants.

Michael was Member of Parliament for Berwickshire & East Lothian from February to October 1974 and Edinburgh South from 1979-87. He was Member of Parliament for Devizes between April 1992 and the General Election of May 2010 when he retired from the House of Commons.

He was a Member of the House of Commons Energy Select Committee from 1979-83 and Chairman of the Scottish Conservative Party from 1980 until 1983. He was Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Scottish Office with responsibility for Home Affairs, Housing, Local Government, Rating Reform and the Environment from 1983-87; and he was a member of the Public Accounts Committee and Chairman of the Backbench Constitutional Affairs Committee from 1992 until May 1993.

In May 1993, Michael was appointed Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Northern Ireland Office. In January 1994, he was appointed Minister of State at the Northern Ireland Office. He was made a Privy Counsellor in January 1996. Appointed QC (Scotland) 1996.

Michael was appointed to the Shadow Cabinet with responsibility for Constitutional Affairs in June 1997, a position he held until June 1998 when he became Deputy Party Chairman. In October 1998, Michael became Chairman of the Conservative Party.

In September 2001, he was appointed Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs; in November 2003 he also became Shadow Secretary of State for International Affairs. Until December 2005, he was Shadow Secretary of State for Defence and Deputy Leader of the Party. He was a member of the ISC from 2006 to 2010.

Michael is currently Chairman of Global Strategy Forum, a think tank on international affairs (unpaid); Chairman of the Gulf Policy Forum (unpaid); and Honorary President of Kennet and Avon Canal Trust (unpaid).

Over Michael's extensive Parliamentary career, he has established himself as an authority on international and defence issues. He hopes to bring this – together with his wide-ranging Parliamentary and legal experience – with him to the House of Lords.

Michael is married to Jane Fitzalan Howard and they have two daughters.