

In memory of Dr Doug Naysmith

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The Bristol Port Company's Managing Director, Sir David Ord, pays tribute to former Bristol MP Dr Doug Naysmith.

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It is with deep sadness that we learned of the death of Dr Doug Naysmith at the age of 82. Together with the late Graham Robertson, Doug was instrumental in enabling Terence and I to achieve the purchase of the Port from Bristol City Council in 1991.

We heard that the City may be interested in a sale of Avonmouth and Royal Portbury Docks in order to save themselves some £10m a year in subsidising losses. We approached Graham, who was then Leader of the Labour Group, the controlling party in the City Council. The supervision of the Port at that time was vested in the Docks Committee and Doug was the Chairman of that committee. Accordingly, Terence and I met Graham and Doug for lunch in Bristol and put our proposition to them. Some 15 months later, the sale was confirmed by a vote of members in the City Council and we took over on August 27th 1991.

During this period Doug was involved in all aspects of the discussions and his singular objective was to keep the Port open by encouraging new investment and thereby preserving employment for as many as possible. This required persuasion of his fellow councillors and officers within the Council and the various trade union officials at that time.

Terence and I, together with all past and current employees, owe Doug a debt of gratitude for his huge contribution at that time.

Sir David

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