
Tributes paid to a hard-working ex-council chief

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A RADICAL and entrepreneurial chief executive – who was at the helm in Herefordshire and Worcestershire before helping to regenerate the run-down London Docklands – has died.

Reg Ward, who is perhaps most famous for spearheading the redevelopment of the Docklands area of London, was also the chief executive of Hereford and Worcester County Council for four years.

He joined the council in 1976 with a £15,000 salary before he left in July 1980 and took a £30,000 job as chief executive of the London Docklands Regeneration Board during the Thatcher years, the role for which he is now most famous.

Mr Ward, of Stow-on-the-Wold in Gloucestershire, died on Thursday, January 6, aged 83.

He was married to Betty, who died last year, for 56 years and is survived by their son and daughter.

In the two counties in 1980, he called for local government to become more decentralised and pressed for greater use of community buildings and schools.

He was not afraid to put noses out of joint at County Hall, angering other council chief officers in February 1979 by producing a confidential report without consulting them first and he was also accused the same year of empire-building with his plans to appoint two new officials.

When he left the council to go to London, he was described by councillors as hard-working and a breath of fresh air, while others said there was never a dull moment with him in charge.

During his time in the two counties, he was known for his hands-on approach, familiarising himself with the 88 electoral wards of Hereford and Worcester County Council during a series of walkabouts.

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