

Community News

Royal visitor focuses on youth projects

By Georgina Townshed

HIGH Ashurst Outdoor Education Centre received a visit from Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex, last week when he came to see a selection of projects supported by Surrey

Youth Support Service. Surrey County Council chairman Cllr David Munro invited the prince to see the work done at the Mickleham centre, involving some of the county's most vulnerable young people. Most of the projects are

connected to the Duke of Edinburgh Awards - of particular interest to the prince as he is now trustee of the award scheme.

A spokesman said: "He made an instant hit with the young people, chatting and laughing with them, and showing enthusiastic interest in activities ranging from jewellery-making to boxing, carpentry, machine sewing, bicycle repairs and motor mechanics and even juggling."

GASP Motor Project, based

in Albury, brought some of its students to demonstrate wheel changes on go-karts.

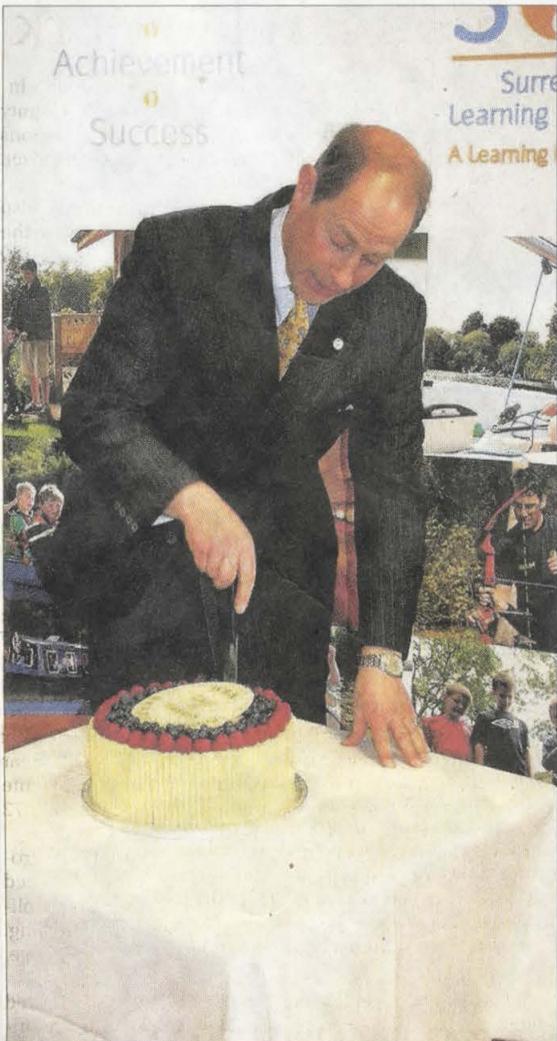
Other projects represented included the Youth Engagement Scheme, where youngsters learn new skills and teamwork with Surrey Fire and Rescue, and carpentry workshops at Woking and Epsom where young people on the Youth Restorative Intervention programme are taught woodworking skills.

Ian McDougall, assistant youth support officer who supervises the

carpentry workshop and one of his students, Jordan Clark, presented Prince Edward with a handmade bird box.

It was the prince's 51st birthday the day before, so the Surrey Outdoor Learning and Development (SOLD) catering team at High Ashurst baked him a cake, which he cut to a rousing chorus of *Happy Birthday* from more than 100 young people.

Before leaving to explore Dorking caves, he unveiled a plaque to commemorate his visit.



Prince Edward cuts a cake, which was baked for his 51st birthday by Surrey Outdoor Learning and Development (SOLD) catering team at High Ashurst.



Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex, unveils a plaque to mark his visit.



GASP Motor Project, based in Albury, brought some of its students to demonstrate changing wheels on go-karts.

