

Sir Edward Young  
Buckingham Palace  
London  
SW1A 1AA

15 April 2021

Dear Sir Edward Young

It is with great sadness that I am writing today to express, on behalf of Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, our heartfelt condolences to Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal family on the loss of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

We had a special relationship with the Duke, who was an early advocate of Lee Valley Regional Park and was pivotal in its creation over 50 years ago.

His long standing relationship with the Park began with a helicopter ride. The Duke flew over the area on his way from London to the north east and saw what was below, which in those days was a collection of rubbish tips, sewage works and gravel pits.

From then on, he became an early supporter of a plan to transform the area into a 'playground for Londoners'. He was the key speaker at a conference in July 1964 where a report by the Civic Trust called 'A Lee Valley Regional Park: an essay in the use of neglected land for recreation and leisure' was presented to MP's, councillors, statutory bodies and other organisations with an interest. The report set out an astonishingly ambitious plan for the Lee Valley including fun palaces, a motorcycle scrambling track, courses for water-skiing and powerboat racing, restaurants, open spaces and leisure venues.

It is safe to say that, the Duke's support and involvement behind the scenes, was instrumental in garnering the political support needed to create the Park, and the one body to oversee it – Lee Valley Regional Park Authority – and for this, we are forever grateful.

The Duke remained closely interested in the Park. In 1971 he visited the new LVRPA headquarters and Picketts Lock, the Rye House boatyard and Dobbs Weir picnic area. He returned in June 1973 to open the Picketts Lock Leisure Centre and then again in 1977 for a tour of the area by helicopter during the Silver Jubilee year. The Duke piloted a craft of the Queen's Flight to visit the Eastway and Lea Bridge Sport Centres in June 1977.

He came back in 1992 to celebrate our 25th anniversary and the opening of River Lee Country Park, then a newly created 1,000 acre country park, which had required a 10-year programme of landscaping work; and he returned again in 2004 to open Gunpowder Park, a new 200 acre park which was created from a remediated munitions testing site.

We will always remember the Duke with very fond memories and are forever thankful for his support over the years.

Please send our deepest sympathy to Her Majesty and the wider Royal family from myself and all those at Lee Valley Regional Park Authority at this very sad time.

Yours sincerely



Paul Osborn  
**Chairman**