

## ?MSA Trust to open 'Sarah's Wood' in Sherwood Forest for those affected by devastating condition

Friday 2 June, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Multiple System Atrophy Trust (MSA Trust) has been allocated a site in Sherwood Forest, Nottinghamshire, to cultivate an oak wood to mark the occasion of the Trust's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The opening of 'Sarah's Wood' will take place on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017 from 2pm where supporters will plant the first oak saplings. From that moment on, everyone who joins the MSA Trust will be given the opportunity to have an oak tree planted in their name and as the oak trees grow, the forest will become a symbol of hope to those who live with this terrible condition and their families.

The Wood will be named after the Trust's founder, Sarah Matheson, who was diagnosed with the rare neurological condition, MSA, and had nowhere to turn to for support. Sarah's brother, Hugh Matheson, has provided the two-hectare site and will open it following a celebratory afternoon tea in the grounds of Thoresby Estate for members of the Trust and supporters.

Hugh Matheson: *'Hope has been the theme from the very start of the MSA Trust and the momentum of hope has led us to the idea that every person with MSA will be given the opportunity to have an oak sapling set aside in their name. The life cycle of an oak is approximately two hundred years. We hope that a cure for MSA will have been cracked long before that. In the meantime, we hope people with MSA, their families and friends will know that there is a place in the very middle of England where they are represented by a tree growing and thriving in a wood that will, in its maturity, merge and become one with the ancient oaks of Sherwood.'*

Ends

Notes to Editors: The MSA Trust is the UK and Ireland's leading charity supporting people affected by MSA. The Trust provides its services free of charge to people affected by MSA – they include MSA Nurse Specialists, a Support Group network and an email and telephone support service. The Trust also funds vital research to find the cause, and one day, cure for MSA.

Multiple system atrophy (MSA) is a rare neurological disease that leads to premature death. It causes brain cells to shrink resulting in severe problems with multiple bodily functions. People with MSA often end up in need of full time care, doubly incontinent and in some cases unable to communicate, swallow or move. Some people with MSA say it feels like the disease traps them in their own bodies. There is no known cause or cure for MSA.

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