



For immediate release

Happy Birthday Sherwood Forest Trust

– Celebrating 25 Years of great work for nature, culture and community

The Sherwood Forest Trust – the only charity entirely focussed on Sherwood Forest – is 25 years old this November. The Edwinstowe based charity plans a year-long celebration of what it has achieved and what it intends to do for the next quarter of a century.

Chief Executive Patrick Candler explains: “Since 1995, when the then Secretary of State for the Environment, the Rt Hon John Gummer, let loose an arrow to open the Trust, we’ve achieved major successes bringing millions of pounds into the Sherwood area, for the benefit of wildlife and people.”

Key past projects carried out by the Trust include:

- The first Lottery funded Landscape Partnership Scheme (LPS) from 2002-2007 – worth £5.5m
- A TV campaign to ‘Discover King John’s Palace’ (2014) at King’s Clipstone.
- Celebrating the 800th anniversaries of the sealing of the Magna Carta in 2015, and the Forest Charter in 2017
- Planting thousands of trees all over Sherwood, working with schools and local communities
- Restoration of hedgerows and lowland heathlands such as Sherwood Heath (which won a national Green Flag award) and Oak Tree Heath
- Organising The Major Oak Woodland Festival – the biggest of its kind in the county

- Recent creation of the Mayflower 400 Oaks Pilgrim Plantation in Bassetlaw
- Launching the 'Spirit of Sherwood' local heritage project, to engage local people with the WW2 history of Sherwood Forest.

Terry Yates, Chairman of the Trust says: "It's been a real privilege to be Chairman of the Trust for the past 10 years. Though we're a small charity, we have built up an enviable reputation for the range of quality of the work that we do for nature and the support we've given to private sector companies and local authorities, but mainly local community organisations. The gist of what we do is in our name – people *Trust* us!"

"But the birthday celebration isn't all about our past. We have our sights on the future. In 2021, we're launching a new campaign to do even more sustainable conservation work, community engagement, woodland and heathland restoration. In a time of climate extremes and huge pressures on our environment and livelihoods, we need to be working even harder to redress the imbalance of nature."

But with Covid 19 effecting all organisations, how does a small but passionate local charity weather the storm? Chief Executive Patrick Candler outlines the challenges:

"In a 'normal' year, autumn would be our most productive time, beginning with the Major Oak Woodland Festival and the start of the tree planting season. In every past year we've been able to fund a tree planting or heathland restoration programme with the help of sponsorship and direct physical help from local businesses. This year, such help has not been possible for understandable reasons.

But we are keeping things ticking over and in the past month we've collected more than 5000 acorns in this 'mast' year for our Sherwood Seed Bank. These are all now in propagation trays ready to grow and be planted out a year from now – when hopefully Covid will be history.

We're also working with a local school to plant fruit trees in the school garden, while on our culture and history side, our latest heritage project Spirit of Wartime Sherwood' recently allowed two classes from a Mansfield school to experience a WW2 Evacuees Day – reliving how wartime children from the cities were relocated

Ends

Notes for Editors:

From the time of William the Conqueror, Sherwood Forest was a Royal Hunting Forest – a playground for the medieval kings – and stretched over most of Nottinghamshire north of the Trent. But by the early 20th century it had dwindled to only a shadow of its former size. The coal beneath the forest brought mining, industry and jobs – but at the expense of nature. Through two world wars the Forest was used by the Army for training troops, to hide huge amounts of ordnance and ammunition, even as a secret oilfield. That even fragments of the Forest's former heath and ancient woodland survived is perhaps a miracle.

In the 1990s, The Forestry Commission, Nottinghamshire County Council and some of the major landowners, charities and agencies working in the area recognised that if action wasn't taken, the special heathland, woodland and grassland nature habitats that had developed over centuries were in danger of disappearing, along with the local history and heritage of this iconic landscape. The fruit of much discussion was the formation of the Sherwood Forest Trust.

For further information about the work of the Trust please contact Patrick Candler:

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Sherwood Forest Trust Video Links

SFT Explainer Video
<https://vimeo.com/454671152>

Sherwood Forest Trust (with subtitles)
<https://vimeo.com/457723396>



Children from Berry Hill School planting trees with the Sherwood Forest Trust