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Use of the new brand

1. **Can I use the new logo on the old yellow arrow?**No, we will no longer be using the yellow arrow as a promotional tool except for in the road sign itself. Please see Page 14 of the brand guidelines for specific guidance about how and where to use the logo.
2. **Do we have a landscape version of the logo?**No we do not have a landscape version. We should use the portrait version in all cases to reinforce the impact of the new logo. Please see Page 14 of the brand guidelines for specific guidance about how and where to use the logo.
3. **Where can I get the new yellow paper?**
The new brand yellow paper cannot be bought off the shelf. If you require a ream of paper and have not already requested this in your stationery order then you can request this from Hatchlands and we will send it out to you.

Timing of the Launch

1. **When can I start using the new brand materials?**
The county booklets, Garden Visitor’s Handbook 2017, and the posters and road signs for early openings will provide a soft launch for the new brand from February onwards. However, we will be timing the full launch to coincide with the media launch in Mid-March and the launch of our new website. Updates to all social media platforms will be timed to go out at the same time in mid-March.
2. **When will the new branding materials be available to use in our promotional activities?**The new Brand Book, logo, typeface, PowerPoint presentation template and Press Release template are all now available for download from the volunteer area of our website: <http://www.ngs.org.uk/ngs-volunteers-area/county-team.aspx>
3. **How can I support the new brand?**In order to ensure that we make the most of our powerful new brand and reinforce our story, why we do what we do, and our personality with our target visitors it is critical that we all – staff, CTMs and garden owners communicate it consistently at every interaction we have with the public. So this includes on the journey to the open gardens, at the gate of the open garden and throughout the visitor’s experience within the garden as well as in print and online.

Roadsigns, Stationery and Poster production

1. **Will we be replacing all our road signs?**

In time we will be replacing all road signs, however we felt it was important to balance the need to have consistent signage with the cost that a total replacement of signs would incur. So in this first year there will be a mix of old and new. You will all receive at least one new road sign which we would ask you to use. However, alongside this please also re-use all your old signs. Next year we will be asking you to request replacements for your old signs within your regular stationery order.

1. **Will we be able to recycle the old road signs?**We are continuing to research alternative methods of recycling the old correx road signs – since many household waste centres are unable to recycle them. We do not have a final solution at this point but rest assured this is important to us and we will continue to identify the best, most cost effective ways to manage this process. If you have any suggestions then please contact Elna Broe at Hatchlands.
2. **Will we still be able to print out posters from home in an emergency as we do currently?**Yes. Although we will prefer wherever possible to produce the posters for you centrally – to ensure the layout and spacing is as it should be, and then send them at short notice as a pdf document for you to print, we can also provide the word template as we do currently for very last minute requirements and requests over the weekend.
3. **Why have the posters been changed?**
As one of our key promotional tools, it was vital that our posters started to reflect our personality, in a way that was consistent with our other materials and would help to reinforce public awareness of the National Garden Scheme. It was important to ensure as we launched the new brand that our logo was prominent, and we have used our new hand drawn font to reflect our unique character – a font that in time will become instantly recognisable as the National Garden Scheme. We have also changed the hierarchy of information displayed so that our garden visitors’ attention is drawn to the most relevant information first and the use of space helps to make it easier to take this information in. We will of course be reviewing and monitoring their effectiveness as we progress though the season.
4. **What will we receive in our stationery order this year?**You will find in your stationery order this year, the new style posters, additional signage, booklet holders & donations boxes, Open Your Garden flyers, Bookmarks and Beneficiary posters. In addition the new county booklets and newly named 2017 Garden Visitors Handbook will also be showcasing our beautiful new illustrative look.

We want to make sure that people sit up and notice our new brand so do please display all of these items prominently in your garden and local area in order to create a real impact.

Our Website

1. **What about our website?**We have taken the opportunity not only to rebrand the website, but also to improve it, making it more user friendly, more interactive and more engaging to potential visitors. The new website will allow visitors to save and bookmark gardens they are interested in visiting, and to ensure they don’t forget they can be sent a reminder when the garden is about to open! And we will be adding more personality and a new tone of voice to the content it holds. As soon as it is ready to go live in March we will let you know so that you can explore it yourself.

Rationale and cost of the brand development

1. **Why was this rebranding exercise undertaken?**Research conducted in 2015, identified that the unprompted public awareness of the National Garden Scheme was only 2% and that this was acting as a powerful barrier to people choosing to visit an open garden for their day out. A decision was taken by the trustees, that we needed to refresh our brand to support the achievement of our strategic goals to:
- increase visitor numbers from 650,000 to 800,000 by 2020
- increase the level of donations made to our beneficiaries each year to £4 million by 2020
2. **What is the cost of this brand refresh?**As part of our tendering for brand agencies Big Fish generously offered to give us a very significant charity discount on their rates so that we were able to benefit from their expertise and creativity at a cost affordable to the National Garden Scheme. The total cost of the brand redevelopment was £65,000. We have budgetted an additional £20,000 for its implementation in 2017.
3. **How was the cost of the brand refresh development and the implementation funded?**

In 2015 we were very fortunate to have received a generous legacy to the National Garden Scheme, with which the Trustees created an NGS Legacy Fund. This fund has been set up to fund strategic long term projects which will help the organisation grow significantly, but which quite rightly, would not be possible to fund with our garden income. As a result none of the costs of the brand refresh development or its implementation have been funded by our garden income. It has all been funded from the Legacy Fund.

1. **Does the rebranding mean that we are changing who we are?**No, who we are is not changing, but we need to become better at sharing our story with potential visitors in order to bring more people into our gardens. The 2015 research highlighted that visitors to our gardens describe the National Garden Scheme as full of personality, the quality of our gardens second to none and their experience memorable. However, our current communications simply do not portray that character.The new brand look and feel, a new friendly and welcoming tone of voice in our communications, together with a more interactive online digital experience will ensure that we can increase awareness, understanding and engagement of our key target visitors.
2. **How will we know if the brand refresh has helped us to achieve our goals?**
Throughout the year we’ll be conducting a series of garden gate surveys to check the implementation of the new brand, the effectiveness of our materials and the response from our visitors. We will use these insights to determine any developments for improvement that might be needed before next year.