

Notes for Garden Registration Form and General Information for Garden Owners



Individual Garden

Thank you very much for putting your lovely garden forward for the National Garden Scheme. We hope that you will enjoy opening it as much as the visitors will enjoy seeing it. Below are notes to help you complete your Registration Form, followed by a short briefing note on things you need to know for your opening. Please contact your local County Team should you require any further information or have any queries. **Contact Details for your County Team Member are in the Garden Visitor's Handbook, County Booklet and on our website, www.ngs.org.uk or phone 01483 211535.**

Alternatively, you can register online through Online Garden Registration; you need an email address to do this. Please contact your County Team or phone 01483 211535 for details.

Please read these notes in conjunction with the Garden Registration Form

Garden Contact: these details are for National Garden Scheme use. Please complete the sections marked with *.

Garden Details for Publication: some garden owners like to present their name in a different way in the Garden Visitor's Handbook and on the National Garden Scheme website. You need only fill in the Name and Address details if these are different from your Garden Contact details - otherwise just put "see above". If you have a website about your garden we would be happy to publish this. Please try and keep the Directions to Garden concise and, bearing in mind that many people will use Sat Nav, make a note in your directions if you know that Sat Nav is misleading.

Garden Description for Publication: this is the way you will attract visitor and press interest. Please make sure your description does justice to your garden's size, features and opening date (e.g. 'wonderful snowdrops' is not helpful if you open in July!). **Please add any quirky or unusual features** and note that, due to the limitations of space in the Garden Visitor's Handbook, we may need to edit your entry if it is over 400 characters (approximately 50 words).

National Garden Scheme Website: please also take the opportunity to send us an extended description (email to hello@ngs.org.uk) and images of your garden for our website. You can show up to 9 images (landscape if possible) on the website. Please email them, in .jpg format, to hello@ngs.org.uk. If you are unable to email the images, please post them (on a CD Rom or USB stick) to National Garden Scheme, Hatchlands Park, East Clandon, Guildford GU4 7RT. Unfortunately we are unable to use images that fall below the following minimum criteria:

Landscape image – must be at least 800 pixels wide

Portrait image – must be at least 600 pixels high.

Please indicate clearly your garden name and county when sending your images.

Opening for National Garden Scheme: please circle clearly each opening date in the calendar. For quick reference, a list of public holidays and important dates is provided.

Admission Details:

- If times and prices are the same for all openings, just list once - otherwise please tell us about variations.
- Gardens do not normally charge accompanied children of 16 and under.

Refreshments: please tick only the boxes which apply. If different arrangements apply on different dates, please tick the appropriate boxes and indicate the variation in the Additional Refreshments section.

By Arrangement Details: please let us know which months you will be open for visitors by arrangement. There is also the opportunity to complete refreshment details, let us know if you allow tours and min or max group sizes (please put the information in the free text box called By Arrangement Additional Information). If private visits are not for the National Garden Scheme please leave this section blank.

Garden Opening Information: please tick any symbols you want to appear in your entry.

- **Wheelchair Access:** please only tick this box if a visit to your garden is “Typically suitable for a person who depends on the use of a wheelchair and transfers unaided to and from the wheelchair in a seated position.” **Wheelchair Access Details:** this is the place to describe any limitations to wheelchair access.
- Please tell us about any **Combined Opening(s)** (combined admission) with other gardens in your area, and any gardens that are **Also Open** (with separate admission but same date) that you want to publicise.
- **Dogs Welcome:** ticking this box indicates that you **will** allow dogs in the garden.
- **Plants for Sale:** ticking this box indicates that you have a plant stand or stall selling plants at your garden opening.
- **Coaches:** ticking this box indicates that you can accommodate coach visits.
- **Accommodation:** if you offer accommodation, please tick the Accommodation box.

Society of Garden Designers: ticking this box indicates that your garden was designed by a member of the Society of Garden Designers.

Press Coverage: please do let us know of any press, radio or TV coverage of your garden in the last year.

Features & Attractions: these are a good way of drawing a new and wider range of visitors to your garden. So please do tell us about any special events or attractions.

Plant Heritage Collections: please tick the box if you have Plant Heritage collection(s) and list the collection(s) in the space provided. Please give details of your Plant Heritage Collection in your garden description.

Garden Phone & Email: please complete this section if you are offering accommodation or opening by arrangement. These need not be the same phone number or email address as your contact details for National Garden Scheme.

Visitor Information: this section allows you to indicate if your garden has any of the specific areas of interest listed. Providing this information will help National Garden Scheme to publicise your garden. Tick a box if the item is a significant feature of your garden, e.g. tick ‘Children Very Welcome’ if you offer special features or activities for children above and beyond allowing them to visit.

Garden Posters: posters are generated automatically from the details in your entry. There are three sizes A3, A4 & A5 and an optional line for extra publicity is available on A4 & A5 sizes only. If you have something which you need, in addition to the standard opening details, please complete the ‘Is there any other information we need to know for your posters?’ box.

When complete, please return the signed form to your County Team Member by the date specified on the form.

Thank you.

General Information for Garden Owners

The Organisation

The National Garden Scheme (NGS) is a charity under Royal Patronage and is run by a Council of Trustees. The head office is at Hatchlands, near Guildford in Surrey. Over 3,500 gardens open under the Scheme and its success is entirely due to the generosity and dedication of the garden owners. Gardens are listed each year in the Garden Visitor's Handbook, on the website, www.ngs.org.uk, and in individual county booklets. There is a sister scheme for Scotland. The NGS is run on a county basis with a County Organiser, supported by Assistants, a Publicity Officer and a Treasurer. Your main point of contact will be notified by your County Organiser.

Before Opening

Compilation of the Garden Visitor's Handbook, County Booklets and Website: The majority of gardens are registered through the Online Garden Registration website; invitations to register are sent by email in August or early September. For gardens that register on paper, relevant forms (Garden Registration Form and Stationery requirement forms) are sent out. ***It is essential that the forms are returned to your County Team Member by the date shown on the top of the Registration Form. If the form is not received by the due date, the garden may not be included in the Garden Visitor's Handbook and County Booklet.***

Each year garden owners are sent a free copy of the Gardens to Visit book and a Discretionary Entry Ticket which (totally at the discretion of the garden owner you are hoping to visit) may allow complimentary admission to other NGS gardens. Some people prefer not to use these tickets and pay at the gate. In the spring, the garden owners' stationery and posters are distributed by the County Team.

Publicity

While the Garden Visitor's Handbook, website and County Booklets are widely available and attract many visitors, additional publicity always helps boost attendance. Posters ordered from Head Office should be displayed locally and please do discuss with your County Team additional ways to promote your garden open day.

Road Signs

Signage to the garden is very important. Do not just rely on the directions in the Garden Visitor's Handbook; please ask for, and put up, directional road signs (available through your stationery order form). You can erect signs on private land provided you have the owners' permission. Local Authority Highway departments are within their legal rights to control road signs. Most councils offer some sort of arrangements for temporary signs for community or charity events, but arrangements vary for each council or borough. To make sure you are operating within the rules, please follow these basic guidelines:

- Provide a copy of your calendar of garden openings at the start of the season to the local planning authority to let them know that you wish to advertise these openings.
- Once you have permission, signs on the highways can be put up for a limited period before an event and must be taken down as soon as possible afterwards (again the time limits vary). In some cases, signs have been removed by local councils as a result of objections by local people.
- NGS signs should be well sited and firmly fixed. Use the COREX lightweight signs provided and try to ensure that they are fixed to a post or hedge off the highway verge. Don't fix signs to traffic lights or other highway signs or on roundabouts. Tie the road signs firmly as they are easily blown off by strong winds.

Garden Maintenance & Health and Safety

Gardens selected for the Garden Visitor's Handbook are of a high standard and the NGS greatly appreciates the efforts owners make to maintain the standard and make their garden as perfect as possible for the day. It is important that the NGS's reputation for good gardens is upheld. Garden owners should look at their gardens with an eye to removing, or notifying the visitor of, potential hazards and make sure that the garden paths etc are clear on the day. **Please display the Welcome notice at all garden openings** (the Welcome Notice will be supplied with your garden stationery order). Gardens are reviewed at regular intervals and the County Organiser may ask you to take a break or withdraw your garden from the NGS.

Opening the Garden and Collecting Money

The NGS hopes owners will donate all the money raised from their openings to the NGS, for the benefit of the charities we support.

Please bank the money from your opening and complete an online Garden Proceeds Form (details of how to do this will be emailed to you after your opening). All money is transferred to a central banking system to earn interest prior to distribution to beneficiary charities.

- **By Arrangement:** Money raised from private openings arising from your entry in the Garden Visitor's Handbook should be donated to the NGS in the usual way. By Arrangement visits provide a way of raising extra money by including a garden tour and/or tea in the price. The entry charge can be increased to cover your time, opening the garden specially and refreshments.
- **Charity Commission Requirements:** Garden visitors must be informed if any of the money raised is going to another charitable organisation and Head Office can supply appropriate signs if required. A Charitable Donations poster, with details of the amounts given to the charities the NGS supports, is available via the Stationery Order Form.

Insurance

The NGS has its own public liability insurance, which provides cover on the day the garden is open for the NGS. All visitors must be given a ticket on entry to the garden (including privately arranged visits). The cover is only for visitors and volunteers raising monies for the NGS. You are responsible for insuring your own property including garden furniture. Please notify your household insurers of your opening dates. They are usually cooperative; if they are not, please let us know.

- **Accidents:** In the very unusual event of an accident, please note all the details and inform your County Team Member the next working day. Photograph the scene if possible.
- **By Arrangement:** Please keep a note of the date, number of visitors and a contact name in case of a retrospective insurance claim.

NGS Beneficiary Charities

Macmillan Cancer Support; Marie Curie; Hospice UK; Carers Trust; Queen's Nursing Institute; Parkinson's UK; Perennial. The NGS also supports other charities, and the guest charity is nominated by Garden Owners via their County Team Member.