



2021 the year ahead...

Communications & campaigns



2020 was a year of huge challenges but despite it all we managed to maintain amazing levels of communications across all our platforms and media contacts. Your story leads helped us create impactful press releases and guide TV, radio, newspaper and magazine journalists and researchers to the gardens and garden owners they wanted to feature.

In 2021 we're hoping for a more normal year and are keen to build on our story-telling to spread the word about our brilliant organisation and, while we have themes and campaigns of our own which are listed below and diarised overleaf in the 2021 calendar, the media will often throw us a curve ball so we may be looking for different angles, people and features not mentioned here. We will run a virtual garden campaign but on a smaller, monetized basis and will share details on that soon.

The pandemic dramatically altered our communications plans for 2020 and as we head into a new year we will need your help to keep generating additional income and interest for the National Garden Scheme - whatever happens! We're hoping for a normal year but, in the event of lockdown's impacting us again, we'll revert to a similar virtual communication plan to the one we devised and launched in 2020. Otherwise...

IN 2021 WE'D LOVE YOUR HELP ...

Along with the seasonal campaign themes listed in the calendar overleaf there are a number of other themes and story threads that we'll be looking at in 2021 and we would love your help in identifying the following:

- **Gardens and health case studies** (ngs.org.uk/gardens-and-health-week/) Gardens took on a whole new level of importance for health and wellbeing in 2020 and these case studies were particularly popular with media and supported our campaign throughout the year. We're looking for garden owners linked to our beneficiaries or who garden for their health and wellbeing and are keen to share the positive benefits of their garden and gardening for health. Ideally we'll link their stories with their garden opening so need contacts and stories 6-8 weeks in advance of their garden opening. We're also planning a new digital booklet with our beneficiaries on Gardens and Health to tie in with Gardens and Health week May 7th - 16th.
- **Small Gardens** (whether opening alone or as a group) press and supporters like to see inspirational small gardens - we'd like to build a portfolio of virtual visits (video) and gardening/design tips from our smaller gardens.
- **Trees.** Our partnership with the Woodland Trust that kicked off in 2020 will continue so we'll continue to look for gardens with great trees that tell a story - it could be an ancient or historic tree, a special collection of trees, an arboretum, a newly planted wood or orchard, or a 'family tree', one that generations have enjoyed and that has been documented by the family. Great treehouses too please. See <https://ngs.org.uk/woodlandtrust/> for inspiration.
- **Wildlife** gardens and garden owners in your county that are going the extra mile for native British wildlife especially bees as the BBC is running a Big Bee Challenge in 2021 that we're keen to link to.
- **Diversity.** Gardens and garden owners with a difference - global influences in the UK - young GOs - disabled gardeners - minority groups - gardens against the odds (ie in unusual places - rooftops - former wasteland etc) community gardens and allotments.
- The National Garden Scheme **visitor experience** - we're keen on collecting high quality photographs that illustrate the experience enjoyed by visitors in our gardens. Whether it's chatting with a garden owner or a group of friends, a child exploring plants ... remember you'll need the subjects permission before sharing these and to observe any social distancing measures!

Ideally we'll link all these stories with garden openings or key calendar dates so need contacts and stories 6-8 weeks in advance of their garden opening / key date.

You can submit outline ideas and contacts via email at: stories@ngs.org.uk or send to: Communications Manager, Vicky Flynn vicky@ngs.org.uk - Tel: 01483 213908.

All activities will be supported by regular web content, social media, eNewsletter and PR outputs where appropriate.



2021 the year ahead...



	Seasonal Themes and Campaigns	Comms outputs / events
January	Building up to Snowdrops (PR out in December/ January) - exploring new gardens in 2021 (PR)	Virtual Publicity and Social Media Conference date tbc Virtual NEW SEASON launch for journalists date tbc
February	Seasonal theme: Snowdrops	Regional meetings (virtual)
March	Seasonal theme: Daffodils	Regional meetings (virtual)
April	Seasonal theme: Daffodils / Spring / Wildlife - start of the Big Bee Challenge	
May	Seasonal theme: Tulips Gardens & Health Week: 7th - 16th May - we will launch a gardens and health digital campaign and booklet in association with the beneficiaries. Strong case studies from the counties to support this will be vital. (PR National / Regional) Start promoting the Great British Garden Party	May is the full-on launch of the garden visiting season and Gardens and Health, but the campaign and related PR and case studies will run throughout the year. Please make sure case studies are submitted well in advance of garden openings. All content for The Great British Garden Party on the website
June	Garden visiting - the benefits and impacts of visits Group gardens and small garden focus	
July	High summer and garden visiting	
August	Family friendly - children's activities Second press push for the Great British Garden Party	
September	Continuing promotion of the Great British Garden Party on the website Seasonal theme: End of summer colour / allotments Legacies - remember a charity week Christmas sales promo begins	The Great British Garden Party 14th-20th September Pre-order for 2022 Visitors Handbook begins
October	Seasonal theme: Autumn colour / trees / woodland Revisiting Virtual Garden Visits/Winter Cinema Club	PR around seasonal themes
November	National Tree Week Seasonal theme: Winter tips Revisiting Virtual Garden Visits/Winter Cinema Club	Annual lecture - date & speaker TBC Public facing Impact Report published Forward planning for snowdrops 2022
December	Impact stats and report with video shared (PR) Seasonal theme: Christmas / craft / garden planning Looking ahead to 2022 gardens (social and PR)	PR around NGS impacts and seasonal themes plus new gardens for 2022 Pre-order for 2022 Visitors Handbook