Head of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement

Salary: £45,000 to £51,000 per year
Permanent, full-time
Office-based – East Clandon, Surrey
Reporting to the Chief Executive Officer

Help tell the story of our first 100 years. Then help shape the next 100.

The National Garden Scheme is a small charity with an extraordinary story and a huge impact. For nearly a century, we have enabled private gardens across England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands to open, uniting garden lovers and raising millions for nursing and health charities through admissions, plant sales and homemade tea and cake.

As we approach our centenary, we're looking for an exceptional storyteller and relationship-builder to join us as Head of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement. You'll work across our incredible network of garden owners, volunteers, beneficiary charities, partners and media, building trusted relationships and helping more people understand the remarkable impact of this unique charity.

Working alongside our CEO, you'll celebrate our first 100 years and shape the next through powerful communications, creative thinking and confident influencing—building the relationships, reputation and stories that will carry the National Garden Scheme forward.

What the job involves

You'll lead our communications and stakeholder engagement, combining strategic direction with hands-on delivery in a small team. From shaping campaigns and senior relationships to writing copy and producing materials, you'll raise our profile, strengthen relationships and help more people discover and visit our gardens.

- grow awareness and garden visits through an annual communications plan built around compelling themes, stories and campaigns
- extend our reach and reputation through strong print, digital and broadcast media relationships and a responsive press office, directing the annual January media launch, producing media materials and handling journalist enquiries
- demonstrate our funding's impact through trusted senior beneficiary charity relationships, collaborative plans, joint communications, events and storytelling
- make our impact clear through the Accounts Impact Report, Julia Rausing Trust Report, Biodiversity Report and annual Impact Report, bringing together beneficiary charity reporting, evidence and stories
- engage audiences with stories and case studies from garden owners, volunteers and colleagues across media, print and digital, keeping editorial and website content accurate, accessible and engaging
- deliver high-quality publications: produce the weekly eNewsletter, write for the *Garden Visitor's Handbook*, produce and promote the annual *Little Yellow Book of Gardens and Health*, and develop other publications as needed

- help county teams promote garden openings confidently with timely, on-brand press releases, editorial content, images, adverts and advertorials, championing our values and key messages throughout
- strengthen communications through advice and practical support to the CEO and colleagues on briefings, emerging issues and crises; line-manage and collaborate with the Social Media Lead; and use media monitoring and performance insight to improve plans and demonstrate impact

What we want from you

You'll be an experienced, hands-on communications leader who combines strategic thinking with strong editorial judgement and creativity. You'll build trusted relationships across our varied, highly engaged network, advise the CEO and board confidently, develop junior colleagues and turn plans into effective communications.

Essential

- significant experience of planning, delivering and evaluating communications campaigns, with the confidence to advise senior leaders
- experience of running a press office and building productive media relationships
- outstanding writing, editing and proof-reading skills, with the editorial judgement to adapt stories and short- and long-form content for different audiences and channels
- strong interpersonal and stakeholder-management skills, building trust and influencing across volunteer, supporter, partner, senior leadership, influencer and charity networks
- experience of managing digital channels and website content through a content management system, with sound understanding of image selection, permissions and copyright
- strong project-management skills, balancing competing priorities, publications and deadlines while working independently and collaboratively
- line-management experience, including developing or supporting colleagues

Desirable

- experience in a charity, not-for-profit or small organisation, and an interest in gardens and horticulture
- experience of using WordPress
- graphic design, print and digital production or video skills, using Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, Creative Suite or similar tools

What success will look like

Success in this role means you will:

- Direct the centenary campaign launch, inspiring existing audiences and bringing new ones into the National Garden Scheme's story
- bring the impact of garden visits to life, deepening public understanding of the funding they generate for nursing and health charities
- mobilise garden owners and volunteers to champion their gardens, equipping them with the materials and support to promote confidently
- drive trusted, collaborative beneficiary relationships that demonstrate our value and strengthen our standing as a partner
- make the National Garden Scheme a go-to source for journalists and media outlets seeking compelling, credible and timely stories
- set a clear editorial direction that gives every publication and channel a consistent, distinctive and engaging voice
- drive measurable growth in awareness, engagement and garden visits through ambitious, targeted communications

Why work with us?

For almost 100 years, the National Garden Scheme has brought people together through a shared love of gardens.

The generosity of garden owners, volunteers and visitors enables us to make substantial donations to nursing and health charities, supporting many people, including those affected by cancer, Parkinson's, poor mental health and the pressures of unpaid caring. In 2025, the charity announced a record £3,875,596 in donations from funds raised through garden openings. Our main beneficiaries are Macmillan Cancer Support, Marie Curie, Hospice UK, Carers Trust, Parkinson's UK and The Queen's Institute of Community Nursing.

Our model is simple, joyful and incredibly effective: exceptional gardens, generous people, strong communities and a shared determination to make a difference.

Join us and you'll have the opportunity to work at the heart of that remarkable network, helping celebrate everything it has achieved while shaping how its story is told in the future.

How to apply

Please send your CV and a covering letter to **Richard@ngs.org.uk**

Application deadline: Midnight on Wednesday 2nd December 2026