

Scotland's **GARDENS** Scheme OPEN FOR CHARITY

Taking Photos of your Garden

As we approach another summer of garden openings, we would like to ensure that the way we represent your garden in the Scotland's Gardens Scheme website and book is accurate and showing it off to its full potential. A great part of this is the photographs we use of your garden. This article provides information to help you to get the best photographs to promote your garden.

The photographs play a big part in attracting visitors and supporting each garden description. Photographs are used on our website and in our guidebook. We are also some times contacted by press interested in promoting our work and while these opportunities can be very beneficial, we can only pass on gardens with good quality photographs, both in terms of content and print quality. We would therefore like your help to see that we have the photographs of your garden that are up to date, attractive and usable for website, guidebook and promotional opportunities.

When and what to Photograph

- Choose a bright day when the garden is looking its best, one or two weeks before/after opening is ideal so that the photographs match the description in the book/web.
- Carefully select what is in the pictures, vistas are good as well as individual plants and flowers if you have rare or impressive specimens.
- Look at the description of your garden on the website/book and try to take photographs that represent that description.
- Take a variety of photos, from different positions in the garden.
- Our PR consultant tells us that journalists are always looking for "quirky" gardens. Therefore, if you do have anything that fits this bill, please get a photo (and see that it's highlighted in your garden description).

Photographs with People

It might also be nice to take pictures during garden openings, of people enjoying your garden. In this case our lawyer has made the following recommendations:

- At your entry gate where you are taking your admission fee, post a clearly visible sign which states: "Photographs will be taken at today's open day. If you would prefer to not be included in a photograph, please notify staff at the entry gate."
- If someone asks to not be included, warn the photographer that such a person is in the garden, and ask the person(s) to let the photographer know should they find themselves nearby him/her.
- Please avoid photographing children or vulnerable people as legal permissions are required. If you would like to provide SGS with photographs with children present, which can be very helpful for promotional purposes, please contact the SGS office to provide you with the appropriate release forms for children and vulnerable people.

Permission to Use your Photographs

It will be assumed that any photographs that you send to SGS office are available for us to use for the purposes of promoting your SGS garden opening either directly or indirectly. We will also assume, unless told otherwise, that your photographs do not infringe any existing copyright or licence of any third party.

Therefore, if the photograph was taken by you this will be very straightforward. But if it was taken by anyone else, you must be sure to have their permission to provide it to us. This is particularly important if the photograph was taken by a professional as they might have particular usage stipulations that you must make us aware of. Also please let us know if the photographer wants to be credited, in which case we will put ©photographer's name, whenever we show the photograph.

Please note that we will not pass your photographs on to anyone except for promotional purposes relating directly to Scotland's Gardens Scheme. From time to time we receive requests from external bodies, such as tour operators, and we will refer these requests to you directly.

Photo Resolution and file size

The size of each photograph dictate how it can be used. High resolution is required for print whereas a lower resolution can provide good looking images for screen (website) use. Whereas the exact resolution depends on the actual physical photo size, a rough guide for resolution can be considered within the actual photograph file size. The following guidance may help:

- Use a good camera for most of your garden photographs, as cameras would normally take at least the size photos we need. Or get help from someone who has a good camera, there are photography enthusiasts everywhere!
- Some phones are good but you must make sure the size is big enough. Most phone cameras state clearly 2MB, 5MB in the settings etc. so you can select the photo size.
- Roughly speaking, a photograph file size of 5MB will be ideal and offer the flexibility for print of any size, as well as online use.
- Photo file sizes less than 1MB will probably only be good for online use (remember that 1MB = 1,000KB).

Sending Photos to the SGS Office

And finally, the last step will be getting your photographs to SGS office. Probably the easiest way will be to email them to us. Sending one photo per email will work best (because of the size), and please email to photos@scotlandsgardens.org. In your email, please include the following:

- Title the emails with the name of the garden and the district, and if it is in a group opening/trail.
- Provide us with key information (eg: tags) about each photo which will help us when searching for images for different marketing purposes. For example, you might highlight:

“snowdrop” or “roses” or “open day raffle” or any feature special to your garden. You can provide as many tags as you think appropriate.

If you are happy using Dropbox, you can also contact the office and arrange for transfer through a shared folder. (In future we hope to provide an upload feature in our Garden Entry Database).

Thank you for taking time to familiarising yourself with the process of taking and sending photographs, it makes a big difference to our image and our ability to attract more visitors and raise more money for charity. However, please let us or your district organiser know if you need more assistance, we are happy to help!

By Lisa Pettersen