

The background is a solid yellow color. It is decorated with several white line-art illustrations of plants. In the top right corner, there is a branch with small, round berries. On the left side, there is a branch with several pointed leaves. In the bottom left corner, there is a flowering plant with several buds and open flowers. In the bottom right corner, there is a branch with several pointed leaves. The text is centered and reads:

# *Open Your Garden For Charity*

with Scotland's  
Gardens Scheme

Scotland's  
**GARDENS**  
Scheme

Scotland's Gardens Scheme is a charity dedicated to helping people open their gardens, raising funds for hundreds of charities each year, through garden gate tickets, plant sales and teas. We have a small team of staff who work hard to support our district volunteer teams and our garden openers, with advice, practical support and resources. We've been helping people to open their gardens for charity since 1931!

Our garden openers may choose a charity or good cause to support, with up to 60% of funds raised going to their own charity of choice. The remaining 40% of funds raised goes to Scotland's Gardens Scheme charity, supporting our core charities and occasional guest charities, as well as Scotland's Gardens Scheme itself. This enables us to keep supporting our volunteers and garden openers, delivering our programme of open gardens through the year.

Read more about our charitable impact here:



[scotlandsgardens.org/our-impact/](https://scotlandsgardens.org/our-impact/)

**Find out more about Scotland's Gardens Scheme:**


Visit our website – [scotlandsgardens.org](https://scotlandsgardens.org)

Receive our e-newsletters by signing up on the website

Follow us on social media

 Instagram

 Facebook

 YouTube

# Why open your garden with Scotland's Gardens Scheme

- We've been helping people to open their gardens since 1931!
- You'll join a great tradition of over 90 years of opening gardens for charity.
- You can choose to raise funds solely for Scotland's Gardens Scheme and our core charities. You can read more about these on our website.
- Alternatively, you can choose which charity you would like to support, with up to 60% of funds raised going to your charity of choice and the remainder going to Scotland's Gardens Scheme charity and beneficiaries. We raise around £350,000 each year for charity.
- You'll be a part of a network of garden enthusiasts throughout Scotland, with around 1000 volunteers and Garden Openers taking part each year.



- You'll also be part of one of the country's longest-standing volunteer communities.
- Your garden open days will be covered by Scotland's Gardens Scheme's Public Liability insurance.
- You'll be mentored and supported by a wonderful team of local volunteers and by our dedicated staff team.
- You'll have access to a wide range of resources to help you make your open garden a success.
- Your garden will be promoted in print, online and on social media.
- You will be invited to join us for special garden visits, our annual conference and our Online Garden Club.



# *What we are looking for*

---

We welcome interesting gardens of all shapes, sizes and styles! We are proud to include a huge range of gardens in our annual programme, from cottages to castles; community gardens and allotments to re-wilded gardens and designed landscapes; walled gardens in the country and hidden urban havens.

Our visitors gain inspiration from their garden visits; they enjoy features such as planting schemes, garden design, use of seating, water and art in the garden; different gardening techniques and even a veg patch or well-turned compost heap. Visitors love the opportunity to visit places usually hidden from the public eye and to meet the people behind the gardens, sharing gardening tips and sometimes even a plant or two.

We recommend that a garden open day should offer interest for at least a 30-45 minute visit. Your local volunteer District Organiser will meet with you to discuss your interest in opening your garden. They will advise you on what is involved in opening your garden and be able to answer all your questions.

## **Opening as a group or village**

If you feel that your garden is too small or you're not feeling confident in going it alone, why not persuade the neighbours to join in? We have many groups of gardens opening and this is very popular with visitors:

- Villages choose a suitable day or weekend to open a selection of gardens.
- Town gardens may open together, with several gardens on the same street or neighbourhood.
- Rural gardens close together may open on the same day – for example, we have an East Lothian 'Trio' of gardens that opens together one day per month from spring to autumn.

# *The support you'll receive*

---

## **Our District Volunteer Teams**

Scotland's Gardens Scheme is made up of a network of amazing volunteers around Scotland, organised into District Teams. They advise Garden Openers on what to expect and how best to plan your open days. They also liaise with Head Office to provide details to add to our national programme of garden open days.

Some Districts have event volunteers who may be able to help you out at an open day – do ask your District Organiser to advise and we encourage garden owners to enlist family and friends to help out with your opening. You may also consider approaching the charity you are supporting, so that they can be involved too, perhaps by having a presence on the day or promoting it.

The District Team has a collection of banners, arrows and signs that can be lent for your open day. They will distribute posters to promote your opening and will provide you with some for your own use to distribute locally.

Our Treasurers manage the funds raised, ensuring that all funds are entered into our database and that Garden Openers' beneficiary charities are paid.

## **Our Head Office Team**

We have a small, very friendly team based in Edinburgh and we are always on hand to advise and help where we can. We are responsible for creating all publicity and supporting our network of volunteers and garden owners.





## Promotion

If you join in with Scotland's Gardens Scheme, you will be included in our print and online publicity materials.

You will be:

- Given a dedicated listing page on our website with a selection of images.
- Listed in our famous Yellow Book.
- Included in our national leaflet, distributed all over Scotland.
- Mentioned in press and PR activities.
- Included in our twice-monthly national e-news and monthly regional e-news.
- Promoted in our social media channels and we encourage social media users to tag us so we can share up to date garden images and news.

## Resources available online

We can provide a range of resources to help you organise your open day. At the beginning of the season, we will send you a link to online resources and downloadable document (hard copies available on request), on a range of topics, for example:

- Downloadable signs to print at home (e.g. arrows, Teas, No Entry etc).
- 'How To' sheets – such as guidance on how to run a Plant Sale, Teas etc.
- Activity sheets for children.
- Recipes.
- Information on insurance and risk assessments.
- What to do if you need to cancel.
- Access to our private web page for garden owners.

## Resources for your open day

We have many resources available to borrow from your local District Team or from Head Office, including:

- Banners, signs and arrows.
- Maps and tickets (produced by Head Office for village and group open days).
- Garden Owner and Volunteer badges.
- We provide your own bespoke posters for your open day to share in your local areas.
- Hi-vis vests (useful for parking attendants and stewards).
- Cashless payment options.



# Planning your garden opening

**Your District Organiser will be a great help in advising you on the different options for your garden, your area and your needs, so you can plan accordingly.**

**You can choose:**

## What

- A simple garden open day is the most common way of holding a fundraising event.
- You might consider adding a few plants for sale to help raise more funds.
- Teas and refreshments are also very popular. Your chosen charity may be able to help with this or your friends may be willing to bake for you.
- Any other features – are dogs allowed; accessibility; special features in your garden.

## How

- Opening on one or more specific dates is the most straightforward way of opening and easiest to promote.
- You can open 'by arrangement' where visitors get in touch to arrange a date and time with the owner. This can work well but you do need to work harder to promote in your local area (we can provide posters and flyers for you to share in local outlets or with local groups, such as gardening societies, ramblers or U3A).
- Choose your ticket price – you can discuss this with your District Organiser.
- Cashless payments and advance bookings – we still find that cash is the most popular option for visitors but Head Office can advise.

## When

- Weekends are typically busier than weekdays so if (for example) your parking is limited, a weekday might suit you better.
- One-off or a series of dates – you could open for a single day or multiple dates through the summer or year.
- Many Garden Openers find that having done the hard work, why not open for two days? This can lessen the risk of being rained off if you have poor weather on one day. You might also consider opening for longer than just an afternoon. For example, opening from 10 – 5 could mean that more visitors are able to attend than if you opened from 2 – 5.

## Where the money goes

- You can choose to donate 100% of funds raised to Scotland's Gardens Scheme and our core charities – read more about these on our website.
- Alternatively, you may choose your charity – up to 60% of funds raised may be donated to your charity or cause of choice, with the remaining 40% going to support Scotland's Gardens Scheme charity and our core beneficiary charities.
- Your local Treasurer will send you a donation form before or around your opening date; this should be completed and returned to the Treasurer along with any funds raised. The Treasurer will then pay your chosen charity on your behalf.
- We ask that all funds raised come to SGS – including teas and plant sales and we will pay your charity or good cause on your behalf.

## What's next?

**We do hope you decide to join us!**

All you need to do is complete the form provided by your District Organiser and we will get the ball rolling. If you have further questions, please do get in touch via the contact details on the back.



# HOW IT ALL WORKS



Express your interest and find out more

District Volunteer advisory visit to your garden



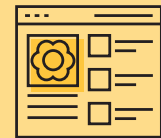
If everyone is in agreement, sign up to join in!

Get ready to open (gardening, posters, baking)



**January** – Guidebook comes out and website goes live

**Autumn** – Provide garden information, open day details and photographs for our database, guidebook and website



Assemble your team of volunteers



Help to publicise your open days in your local area



Contact your chosen charity to see if they can help

Funds to the District Treasurer



Enjoy your Open Day(s)!



Treasurer pays your charity



## What our Garden Openers are saying...



“

*There is something uniquely wonderful about sharing your garden with others. I opened my little city garden for the first time this year with the brilliant and supportive Scotland's Gardens Scheme and was thrilled to share the joy of gardening with so many knowledgeable and interested people while raising much-needed funds for amazing charities," says Libby.*

*"It's a total win-win, if you love your garden, I highly recommend that you open it, as others will love it too. Take the plunge, you'll thank yourself."*

Libby Webb (@docleaves on Instagram) small, urban walled garden in Edinburgh, opened for the first time in 2025 and chose to support CHAS and The Woodland Trust Scotland project.

Your local contact:

“

*Gardens can be used as a force for so much good and Scotland's Gardens Scheme allows people to come together for so many good causes, raising vital funds for charities," says Helen.*

*"Gardening has proven to be a transformational tool for me personally, helping to lever me out of some pretty dark episodes due to poor mental health for the last 20 years. For that reason, I have chosen the mental health charity SAMH as my chosen charity. Gardens, like people, come in all different shapes and sizes and that is what makes each one so special. To bring people together through gardening is really special and can do so much good and spread so much joy and hope."*

Helen Cross, (@grow\_cook\_inspire on Instagram), Scottish journalist, author and presenter. Small urban family garden in the south side of Glasgow; opened for the first time in 2025 and chose to support SAMH and a local primary school garden project.

“

*One of the reasons I love opening our garden for SGS is how it benefits charities and it's so important to understand that it's not just the charities that Scotland's Gardens Scheme supports but every garden owner can choose their own charity. This year we are supporting the Loch Arthur Community," says Colin.*

*"When you've spent all those hours working in your garden, you want to share it with people, and I love sharing my garden. And if by doing that and having people coming in and enjoying it, it helps to raise money for charity, it's just a wonderful win-win situation. You hear the hubbub of people asking questions about your garden and I just love it. Opening your garden to help other people - what could be better!"*

Colin & Pamela Crosbie. Rural garden outside Dumfries, owned by a passionate plantsman with lots of unusual plantings. Seasoned openers, having opened since 2018.

Head Office enquiries:

Info@scotlandsgardens.org

0131 226 3714

Scotlandsgardens.org

SCO49866

