



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

**Trustee Recruitment Pack**





# Contents

Welcome to the Scotland's Gardens Scheme Trustee Recruitment Pack, which we hope you find helpful.

- 1 **Message from our Chairman**
- 2 **Our mission**
- 3 **Our work**
- 4 **The opportunity**
- 5 **The role**
- 6 **How to apply**



1

## Chairman's message

David Mitchell

Thank you for your interest in Scotland's Gardens Scheme and we hope this will inspire you to get involved in a well-loved, national charity that has been at the heart of Scottish horticulture since 1931. We have a small staff team based in Edinburgh (currently home-working) and are largely volunteer-driven, with around 200 regular district volunteers across Scotland, who encourage and support local garden openings. We have an eight-strong team of Trustees and following our recent restructure as a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation), now wish to recruit an additional three Trustees to build the skills base of our Board.

We are particularly interested in candidates with a background in the following areas: **Communications and Digital Marketing, Sponsorship, IT, Legal and Human Resources, with an enthusiasm for gardens and horticulture.** We are committed to building a diverse Board, so we welcome applications from all sectors of society, regardless of ethnicity, age, gender, disability and/or religious persuasion. The wellbeing benefits of plants and gardens to people, wildlife and environment, are well documented, but have never been more important than in the past year, when gardens have become a solace to so many people.

Opening gardens for charity has become so much more than a means to raise funds, but a way of building connections with others and raising spirits.





2

## Our Mission

**Our purpose and vision are to raise money for charity through encouraging, promoting and supporting garden openings, whilst making the whole experience inspiring, rewarding and enjoyable for all involved.**

### **Our Objectives**

- Ensure we have a strong District Volunteer structure with a solid base of gardens of all types and sizes. We will achieve this by:
  - providing useful support to our District Volunteers with guidance, training and appreciation.
  - equipping and supporting Garden Openers to manage their visitor experience and achieve a successful and fun day for all.
- Raise awareness of Scotland's Gardens Scheme and our beneficial impact with a strong marketing presence and good visibility.
- Connect and develop existing and new partnerships with organisations which are aligned with, and supportive of, our vision, including beneficiaries, charities, partner organisations and our local community.
- Ensure good governance and financial sustainability with an active and effective governing body.





### 3

## Our Work

Scotland's Gardens Scheme's core purpose is to support the opening of a wide range of gardens, mostly private, throughout Scotland, to raise funds for charity through garden gate tickets, plant sales and teas, and has been operating since 1931. Funds raised through our garden openings support around 250 individual charities and local causes each year, with 60% going towards causes chosen by our garden openers, and the remaining 40% supporting our core beneficiaries, Maggie's, the Queen's Nursing Institute Scotland, Perennial and Scotland's Gardens Scheme itself. The role of our staff team is to provide central support to our volunteer organisers and to promote garden openings to the public via a range of channels.

### **This work includes:**

- Co-ordination of garden openings nationwide through our regional volunteers and via our central database.
- Promotion of garden openings through our website, e-news, social media channels, our annual 'Yellow Book' guidebook of open gardens and PR.
- Engagement with, and support for, our volunteers and garden openers to make the experience enjoyable and rewarding for all involved.
- Encouraging good levels of fundraising through garden openings and ensuring the sound financial management and dissemination of funds raised.
- Developing and sharing content generated around garden openings, focussing on key themes such as charity news and impact, wellbeing, horticultural practice and volunteer stories.

# The Opportunity

Scotland's Gardens Scheme is a well-established charity with its roots firmly in Scottish horticulture. The past five years have seen significant modernisation of our charity, with work undertaken to develop the technology underpinning our garden openings, a strengthening of our governance and development of our Board. Now, with the transformation of our charity to a SCIO complete, we wish to develop our charity further to continue to improve our communications, our partnerships, our visitor numbers and our charitable impact. As one of our Trustees, you will bring your skills and experience to support our objectives.

Applicants with or without previous Board experience are welcome, but you should be prepared to take an active role within the organisation, giving approximately 1 day per month on average.

Our staff team carry out all operational activity and actively support the Board. The role of Trustees is to bring their expert knowledge and strategic guidance to support and develop the charity.

If you have a passion for gardens and a desire to get involved in a truly volunteer-led charity with a clear purpose, then this could be the opportunity for you.

## Why join?

- This is wonderful opportunity to support an amazing network of volunteers nationwide, with a shared, positive purpose.
- You will gain an amazing insight into the hidden gardens of Scotland, their horticultural gems and the inspiring people behind them.
- Working on a charity Board can be a fun and positive experience.
- We will provide you with an induction programme, so you don't need to know everything straight away.
- 96% of people who sit on charity Boards say they develop new skills.
- 84% of people say that it has helped their professional and personal development.





## Key Candidate Attributes:

- Commitment to the charitable purposes of Scotland's Gardens Scheme.
- Commitment to act always with due care and diligence, in the best interests of the charity.
- Understanding of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities facing SCIO trustees.
- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to the role, including undertaking training.
- Knowledge and appreciation of the type of work undertaken by Scotland's Gardens Scheme.
- Ability to contribute to at least one or more functional responsibilities associated with governance of Scotland's Gardens Scheme, for example; communications and digital marketing, sponsorship, IT, legal and human resources.
- Location – Trustees can be based anywhere in Scotland but must be prepared for occasional travel to the Edinburgh Head Office (currently all meetings are via Zoom).

## Key Priorities for Trustees:

- Direct the charity's strategy and structure.
- Monitor, and be responsible for, the performance of the charity.
- Ensure that the charity complies with relevant legal and regulatory requirements.
- Act as guardian and custodian of the charity's assets.
- Ensure that the governance of the charity is effective.
- Act as an ambassador for the charity and for the Board.

## Commitment (explanation of 1 day per month):

- Quarterly meetings (currently via Zoom), approximately 3hrs with a couple of hours reading prep.
- Interim catch-up calls.
- Bi-annual national conference
- Occasional membership of a trustee sub-group for specific projects.
- Occasional attendance at a local district organiser meeting.
- Trustees are encouraged to visit garden openings through the year to increase visibility to garden owners and District Volunteers.





6

# How to apply

To register your interest, please send a letter to our National Organiser below, outlining your relevant skills and experience, explaining your interest in the role, along with:

- an up-to-date CV
- details of two referees

For an informal discussion or further information, please contact:

Liz Stewart, National Organiser  
[liz@scotlandsgardens.org](mailto:liz@scotlandsgardens.org)

## Recruitment Process:

Application closing date: Monday 10 May  
Shortlisting complete: Monday 17 May  
Interviews (Zoom): Mon/Tue 7/8 June

## Interview Panel:

Chairman, Vice Chairman, 1 Trustee

*NB - we may conduct follow-up, face-to-face interviews and will observe all necessary Covid-19 protocols.*



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