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Description automatically generated**SCOTLAND’S GARDENS SCHEME**

**CHAIR**  
**Role Description**

**About Scotland’s Gardens Scheme**

Scotland’s Gardens Scheme (SGS) is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and has its principal office in Scotland. The charity supports the opening of mostly private gardens, raising funds for around 250 charities each year through garden gate tickets, plant sales and teas. Gardens are sourced, supported and opened through a strong network of volunteers around Scotland. The charity was established in 1931 to raise funds for the Queen’s Nursing Institute Scotland and we still support the charity today, as well as our other core beneficiaries, Perennial and Maggie’s and charities selected by Garden Owners.

**Mission**

To raise money for charity by encouraging, promoting and supporting garden openings, while making the whole experience inspiring, rewarding and enjoyable for all involved.

**Objectives**

1. Ensure we have a strong District Volunteer structure with a solid base of gardens. We achieve this by:  
   - providing 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
2. Raise awareness of SGS and our beneficial impact with a strong marketing presence and good visibility
3. Connect and develop existing and new partnerships with organisations which are aligned with, and can support, our vision, including beneficiaries, charities, partner organisations and our network of volunteers.
4. Ensure good governance and financial sustainability with an active and effective governing body.

**Role Overview**

The Chair of Scotland’s Gardens Scheme is responsible for providing effective strategic leadership and management to the Board of Trustees, enabling them to fulfil their responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the organisation.

**Role, Purpose & Responsibilities**

1. **Overall Charity Governance**

* Provide leadership to the charity and the Board ensuring maximum benefit for both beneficiaries and volunteers.
* Ensure that the Board operates within its charitable objectives and provides a clear strategic direction for the Charity.
* Chair the Board Meetings [a minimum of four per year], the Annual Strategic Planning Session and the Annual General Meeting
* Attend the bi-annual Conference and any interim Regional Meetings as requested by the National Organiser [the latter may be delegated on occasions if required].
* Oversee the management of the Charity at a strategic level, maximising opportunity for development and income generation, and mitigating risk.
* Oversee the work of the Trustees, as outlined in the Trustees General Job Description attached; always fostering and maintaining good working relationships between Trustees.
* Lead the development of the Board and ensure that Board decisions are implemented. This includes taking urgent action [when authorised by Trustees] between meetings or when it is not possible or practical to hold a meeting.
* Chair individual working groups and sub-committees, although this task may be delegated to other Board members.
* Manage the Trustees and the Board in a collegiate manner and include the National Organiser in Board discussions and decision-making wherever possible and appropriate. They will ensure that decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the Charity and that the Board takes collective ownership.
* Ensure that individual Trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities, encouraging positive change where appropriate and resolving any conflicts within the Board.
* Assess the performance of the Trustees and the Board on an annual basis, developing the knowledge and capability of the Board and individual Trustees wherever possible and requested.

**2. Expected Level of Support from the Board**

* With the agreement of the Board, appoint either one or two Trustees, to act as their Deputy.
* Allocate responsibility for specific tasks and project delivery to individual Trustees according to their strengths and interests or require the formation of working groups to progress strategic issues or assist with operational support as required and agreed with the National Organiser.
* Work closely with and support the Honorary Treasurer at all times, monitoring the overall financial performance and sustainability of the Charity [including the Investment Portfolio which is overseen by Adam and Co and by other Trustees with specialist expertise].
* Work closely with and support the Board Secretary, who is tasked to ensure the timely delivery of the annual governance cycle; which includes the Charity Performance Review, the Risk Management Process, the Annual Policy Review and Update, the Trustee Declarations and the Trustee Performance Reviews.
* Ensure that the Board of Trustees is regularly refreshed and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern and lead the charity effectively and which also reflects the values and profile of our stakeholders.

**3. National Organiser and Staff Support**

* Support the National Organiser both strategically and operationally, whilst respecting the boundaries which exist between the two roles, acting as a channel of communication between the Board and the Staff. Where appropriate, the Deputy Chair is also expected to assist with this role.
* Act as the line manager to the National Organiser, being required to hold regular meetings throughout the year as requested either in person, online or by phone. They should also be relatively easily available to provide counsel and advice via email and by phone; with an expectation that they will deal with such requests promptly. They should also ensure that the National Organiser has the opportunity for professional development and appropriate external professional support as required.
* The Chair, with the assistance of the Deputy Chair/Honorary Treasurer should carry out the National Organiser Annual Performance Review.
* Based on the strategic direction provided by the Board, the Chair and the National Organiser should agree the annual work programme, monitor performance and agree the annual report to the board for the charity.
* Where required, help the National Organiser with staff recruitment, performance issues or volunteer management; other trustees should assist with such matters as and when required.

**4. Outreach**

* The Chair is expected to act as a figurehead and ambassador for the Charity, representing it at functions, meetings or in the press. The Chair may on occasions choose to delegate this type of activity to other Trustees as appropriate.
* If requested by the Board or the National Organiser, the Chair may be required to meet with partner organisations, beneficiaries and potential sponsors.

**Person Specification**

* A strong Ambassador prepared to represent SGS to a wide range of audiences and to be a visible presence at garden openings and events.
* Ideally a knowledge of the third sector and charity governance.
* Previous experience as Chair of a voluntary organisation an advantage.
* An interest in, and knowledge of, horticulture and the sector in Scotland.
* An inspirational leader with strong leadership, people management skills and the ability to chair meetings effectively.
* A commitment to the aims and objectives of Scotland’s Gardens Scheme and promoting it in the best interests of its stakeholders, Trustees and staff.
* The time and willingness to fulfil the duties required for the role and get involved with the charity.
* Strategic vision, independent judgement and financial awareness.
* Legally eligible to stand as a Charity Trustee.
* Possess integrity, objectivity, accountability and honesty.

**Terms of Appointment**

* The Chair reports to the Board of Trustees.
* The role of the Chair is not accompanied by any financial remuneration, although reasonable expenses for travel may be claimed.
* The Chair may also be expected to carry out any other duties not noted but commensurate with the role.
* Anticipated time commitment; no more than ½ day per week balanced across the year, but there may be occasions when extra time is required.
* Appointed for a term of three years after which they are eligible for re-election for 2 more years.

**Scotland’s Gardens Scheme SCIO** SCO49866

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