

You may have heard a few days ago that the National Garden Scheme (NGS) will not be opening gardens for the foreseeable future due to the Coronavirus crisis. The National Trust and the Royal Horticultural Society have closed their gardens too. This is all very sad - just when we need to be cheered up in a nice garden - but, as I'm sure you understand, is absolutely necessary, especially now we are in lock down. I have forwarded the full message from the NGS below, which contains some good news too. Despite the current crisis National Garden Scheme Trustees have still been able to commit in excess of £1 million to its beneficiary charities and to 44 community garden projects throughout England and Wales this year.

We are working hard in our garden - we always have plenty of projects to do. It is lovely to be able to get out into the sunshine and to get up close and personal with the plants at least. We thought you might like to see a photo of our beautiful Magnolia tree, planted in the front garden 33 years ago when we first moved in. Set against the blue sky it is a real tonic in these troubled times.



If you have a photo from your garden that lifts the spirits please do send it to us. We won't be voting on our favourite - as we are often asked to do for gardening and other groups when we are giving our talks - but rather we would like share some of them, with your kind permission, in our next newsletter. To get things started, here is one from St Timothee near Maidenhead:



With being stuck at home we know a lot of people are venturing into various online activities that they have previously stayed well away from. With that in mind you might like to look out for us on Twitter - one of the easier social media options - Graham will be posting pictures and messages here <https://twitter.com/berksngs> and for the national picture see <https://twitter.com/NGSOpenGardens> For Instagram see <https://www.instagram.com/nationalgardenscheme> and for Facebook go to <https://en-gb.facebook.com/BerksNationalGardenScheme/> There are a few items on our Youtube pages too and I am sure we will be adding to them during the course of the year. See <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLtLfa9YCRiXgHc6CCoDSsQ>

All these technological options got us thinking. We are going to open our garden, even if we can't currently do it in the normal way - we plan to make a short video of it so we can share it as a 'virtual' opening. A number of other gardens will be doing the same (see the message below). We have yet to finalise the details but we will make sure you get a virtual invite!

In the meantime...



Keep safe and very best wishes

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We continue to support the nation's health and wellbeing

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All National Garden Scheme gardens to close in current Coronavirus crisis

In light of events unfolding over the past few days in relation to Coronavirus (COVID-19) the Trustees of the National Garden Scheme have taken the difficult decision to ask all the charity's garden owners not to open their gardens until further notice.

Commenting on the decision our Chief Executive George Plumptre said:

"It became clear very quickly over the weekend that containing the spread of the Coronavirus through managing social distancing and preventing people from travelling unacceptable distances has become a priority for the public good. This is the first time in the charity's 93 year history that all the gardens have been closed. Even during the Second World War and the swine flu pandemic of 2009-2010 many gardens remained open. We hope, very much, to be welcoming visitors back to National Garden Scheme gardens very soon." Read more... <[https://ngs.org.uk/gardens\\_to\\_close/](https://ngs.org.uk/gardens_to_close/)>

With a significant fall in income inevitable people can continue to support the National Garden Scheme and its beneficiaries by making a donation in lieu of the gardens they may have visited at: <https://www.justgiving.com/ngs/Donate>

A video highlighting the positive partnership between the National Garden Scheme and one of its key beneficiaries Hospice UK, its garden owners and the nation's health and wellbeing – with introduction by Hospice UK ambassador Martine McCutcheon can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/7U38RoitiY>



<http://email.ngs.org.uk/c/1f8zJ2PqAXGds1uGu1FcQu>>

We will be launching virtual tours of some of our gardens very soon so you can continue to enjoy the generosity and hard work of our garden owners from the comfort of your home.

National Garden Scheme | Hatchlands Park | East Clandon | Guildford | Surrey | GU4 7RT

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Every effort is made to ensure that the information in this newsletter is correct at the time of going to press but please check individual gardens for details before setting off.

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