

SCOTLAND'S GARDENS SCHEME GARDEN CLUB

SOCIAL MEDIA TOP TIPS - 16 MAY 2023

This session aimed to provide some insights into social media top tips, to help people get the most out of their social media accounts, help to share garden news and help to promote and make the most of garden openings – and have some fun with social media!

It's a nice way to connect with people – other garden lovers, garden owners and visitors – across the country.

Remember – do as much or as little as you feel comfortable with and enjoy it!

We welcomed guest speakers:

M.T. O'Donnell - Editor of Scotland Grows online magazine and podcast; <https://scotlandgrowsmagazine.com/> and you will also find Scotland Grows on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Lizzie Schofield - Instagrammer https://www.instagram.com/cuthbertsbrae_garden/, Beechgrove regular and SGS Garden Owner and Ambassador

Helen Rushton – Aberdeenshire Garden Owner, Area Organiser and also manages our Scotland's Gardens Scheme national Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/scotlandsgardens>

REMEMBER TO TAG US IN YOUR POSTS – BEFORE YOUR OPEN DAY!

- Follow the Scotland's Gardens Scheme social media accounts (see below)
- Tag us by using the name of our account
- Add hashtags (again, see below) in your post, which helps Head Office and others to see these posts, so that we can share your posts too.
- Tag the charities being supported and encourage them to like and share with their supporters



@scotlandsgardens



@scotlandgardenscheme



@scotgardens



Scotland's Gardens Scheme



@scotlandsgardens

#lovescotlandsgardens #scotlandgardenscheme #scotlandgardensscheme

Social Media - Where to Find Us

Scotland's
GARDENS
Scheme
OPEN FOR CHARITY

M.T.'s Top Tips For Telling the Story

- **How to tell the story of your garden;** put yourself in the position of your followers and think about how to entice them in. Your posts could include...
 - unusual plants in bloom
 - special garden features – artworks, water features, views, paths, veg plots
 - the people behind the garden – experts in particular plants, special interests, creatives
 - as well as practical points about the opening, when, where, who
- **Post, post, post** – remember that when you post something, not everyone will see it the first time so don't be afraid to post more than once. If you have time, you could plan a series of posts about your garden in the run up to your open day/s, showing how the garden is developing, projects you have on the go, for example.
- **Put yourself in the picture** – consider including a photograph of yourself as people like to put a face to the account! Or if you don't want to show your face, include your hands in action.
- **Make it easy** for people to find the information and a **Call To Action** – this could be where to find more information (for example, this could be a link to the open day page on the Scotland's Gardens Scheme website)
 - check that your bio is up to date – it's easy to forget this – including any links
 - add the date, time, address and postcode
- **Capture content as you go for later use** – snap away pictures on your phone so that you have them handy if you'd like to post progress.

Lizzie's Top Tips for Instagram

Lizzie told us that she started her Instagram account in 2018 as a way to document their progress with a new garden – and as new gardeners, they were proud of what they were achieving and it was a good way to share. A very good point was that she felt she became more confident as time went on, including herself in films and finding her 'voice'.

How Instagram works and what it 'likes' - (meaning how to encourage the algorithms used by Instagram to display your posts to more people)

- originally Instagram used to like photographs
- then it preferred video content and reels
- NOW – it's a bit of both!
- Lizzie recommends trying to post something every day to keep the algorithms 'interested'!

- **Building your following:**

- Consider creating useful, practical content through the year
- this could include pruning, mulching, cuttings – a seasonal top tip from your garden
- share what's unique or interesting about your garden – is it a small space in the city? Or a water garden, or you have something special like meconopsis or artworks.
- even pets in the garden can go down well!
- Lizzie found that her 'sideline' of willow weaving items for the garden went down very well and people enjoyed following these.

- **Reels & Video Content**

- **Short and snappy is best** – Lizzie said her most popular posts are no longer than 5 seconds!
- **Timelapses** – Lizzie shared an example of when she was first opening her garden, she created a little

timelapse video of how to get to the garden, passing yellow poster and into the garden gate, which people enjoyed and commented on.

Helen's Top Tips for getting started on Facebook

Facebook is a great place for sharing information.

- It's worth joining various different groups, ranging from local noticeboard groups to special interest groups – there are many relating to plants and gardening, such as the Scottish Rock Garden Club. These are friendly and can offer you good advice.
- Most are also willing for you to share open gardens events – you can share your own posts or share SGS posts to those groups.
- Facebook and Instagram are interlinked and you can adjust your settings so that when you post on Instagram, it will share to Facebook. This can be handy to save you time by reaching two platforms with one post.

Sharing links on Facebook, for example, Scotland's Gardens Scheme news

- Facebook prefers photos rather than links, so Helen recommends posting your pictures to Facebook first, then go back in and add a link afterwards, otherwise Facebook sometimes hides your pictures.
- Remember that Facebook will display different features on different devices – therefore what you see in Facebook on your desktop, will look different to what you see on your mobile or your tablet. When you're getting started, therefore, it can be easier to stick to using the same device.
- Choosing pictures to share – although it can be tempting to choose close-ups of lovely plants and flowers, it's better to choose photographs that show views of the whole garden, to give a better idea of what the garden is like.
- **Short & snappy posts** – for speed, you can cut and paste information from the SGS listing page on the website, but don't include too much! Make sure you include the opening information, any open day special features such as teas, children's activities – and especially mention if there are plants for sale, which are always popular!

It's called social media for a reason!

- Try to like and follow other like-minded groups and people. If you like and comment other posts, it helps to get your own posts seen.
- When you're posting ask others to like and share
- Post to other groups – it has a snowball effect!