

2025 House & Garden Tour Co-Chairs Timeline

August/September

Decide on location for House Tour and start looking for houses and gardens.

October

Once desired houses and gardens have been identified, start to reach out to the homeowners to ask if they would be on the tour. Some houses were recommended and secured by NGC leadership. Process took a few months to finalize.

Five is a good number of houses (keep in mind that we need to staff each house with consultant and docents). 2025 had 7 plus an 8th house for the tea, boutique and ticket sales. We didn't have enough volunteers to staff them. We had many non-NGC members.

Register event with Nantucket Island Chamber of Commerce. Important to do very early. 2025 there was a major conflict with the NHA.

November

Sent letter to homeowners, thanking them again for agreeing and advising that we will be reaching out with questionnaire shortly. (This was basically just a letter to confirm in writing that they had agreed to their property being on the tour – some of the agreements had been just oral with who had secured homes for us.)

Assign house consultants for houses.

Line up House Tour committee chairs.

Decide on ticket price. (We recommend increasing the price next year). See final chair report.

Let volunteer coordinator know number of volunteers needed for each house (docents, floral designs), ticket sales, boutique and tea.

Get preliminary information about the tour on the website. Should be given to the NGC website chair.

Decide on title for House Tour.

January

Begin setting up Zoom meetings with committee chairs.

Contact G. S. Hill (if using) for artwork for House Tour. He has kindly done this at no charge to us for years. We considered suggesting using another artist next year, but Anne Marie Bratton says "There is no better artist than Greg Hill and he has always come through for us. And doesn't even charge. It's tough to move on from that."

February

Zooms with Committee Chairs

Review Sign Up Genius for volunteer slots. Determine how many shifts you want for in person ticket sales on Main Street and in Sconset – if any. Send any changes to Volunteer coordinator. This should be done by the affected committee chairs ie ticket sales, tea, boutique, house consultants etc.

Some House consultants lined up friends to act as docents or do floral arrangements. Others only wanted to use Sign Up Genius.

Review properties sheet, determine location for tea and boutique.

Send out Homeowners Questionnaire (the program chair needs this info as soon as possible so she can start working on the program.)

Arrange transportation

Set Up Ticket Tailor site and generate QR Code for ticket sales and publicity. This MUST be done early. The QR code is necessary for all social media save the dates, website and the printing rack cards.

Final Artwork received. This will be needed for the social media and website save the dates. The artwork is necessary for all social media, save the dates, website and the printing rack cards.

Work with Debbie Thomas (Permits Chair) to arrange for permits. (2025 we had 10 permit applications) New Town deadline is mid-June. Work only with Debbie Thomas – no one else to apply for permits.

March

Zooms with Committee Chairs

Reach out to TJ at Nantucket Party Rentals to secure tents, tables and chairs.

Sign Up Genius ready to go live May 1. A House Tour Chair should be a co-administrator of Sign Up Genius so that she can add or delete people as needed and manage the slots.

Programs Chairs start to receive completed questionnaires.

Order wristbands – get info from Robin Kelly

Reach out to printer (Poet's Corner) about deadlines for rack cards and program. Do rack cards as early as possible after receiving artwork and QR code.

Work with graphic designer (Vinny of Nantucket Studio) on rack cards and program design.

April

Zooms with Committee Chairs

Plan advertising schedule with Communications Chair.

Set up times for Program Chairs to visit houses in person - end of May/early June

House Consultants reach out to homeowners.

Provide Program and House Consultant Chairs with a deadline for Program (we aimed for the end of June) – work backwards with input from graphic designer and printer (Poets Corner) – all together deadlines should be about 6 weeks prior to the tour. Compare costs for printing. Essential that house consultants get visits on the calendar in June so that the Program chair has enough time to write up the houses.

N.B. House consultants that have lined up docents and flower arrangers prior to Sign Up Genius going live need to have this info on Sign Up Genius so that staffing needs are accurate.

May

May 1 Sign Up Genius goes out on email to NGC members.

House Consultant chair should send the house consultants a list of duties

Tickets go on sale on website

Reach out to photographer Jessica Jenkins to ask her to take photographs. She has done this gratis for the past two years. We give her 2 comp tickets and a special lanyard that says, "Official Photographer." These photos go on social media and the website.

Reserve porta potties

Contact NPD to arrange for a police detail on the day. Debbie Thomas does this with her permitting contacts. We asked to have Baxter Rd shut down. Hugely helpful.

June

Coordinate with Communications Chair on Advertising - where advertised and schedule of information.

Reach out to Lucy Leske about Inquirer and Mirror article, arrange to walk gardens with her. We give her 2 comp tickets.

Purchased homeowner gifts (2024: Simon Pearce vases; 2025 Bunny Williams, A Life in the Garden book)

July

Finalize schedule with Properties Chair.

Emailed everyone who bought tickets on Ticket Tailor prior year and thanked them for their support and asked them to come again this year. Had to do this manually as we don't have a mailing list setup through mail chimp (2025 Marianna Brewster began to setup mailing list so that we can send thru mail chimp and not manually.)

Marianne Stanton (former Inky editor). She now has a Substack/ mailing list. Call her and put in a plug for the house tour. Free advertising.

Radio 97.7 Doug Risher. Contact and setup radio interview several weeks before the event. Co-chairs should do this. Paid interview.

Prepare thank you notice (ad) in Inky Mirror. Only use vendors, people, groups who have donated outright, given a massive discount on services or people who've been extremely helpful. Shouldn't be paid advertisers like Inky Mirror.

August

One week before tour, deliver letter to neighbors advising of upcoming tour and apologizing for any disruption.

One week before, deliver homeowner gift and handwritten thank you note. (Include two complimentary wristbands)

If rain is forecast secure sides for tents and floor protection and umbrella covers for houses.

Walk tent locations with TJ to stake tents. Very important that Boutique and ticket sales be close together for WIFI to work.

After Tour

Thank you notes (and email) for committee chairs etc

Send House consultants handwritten thank you notes

Get photos for Instagram and website ASAP from Jessica Jenkins

Provide photos for Annual Meeting slide Show

Get committee reports and all expenses from committee chairs.

Submit final co-chair report

Submit budget for next year (all expenses must be in to do this)

Goal to get Committee reports in by end of August