



**Somerset**  
Wildlife Trust

# Wilder Open Gardens

---

## Fundraising Pack

Tea, cake and wildlife-friendly gardens to  
raise funds for wildlife





“Wilder Open Gardens is a fantastic initiative by Somerset Wildlife Trust, to help spread the word about how easy it is, with just a few tweaks, private gardens can become a haven for insects, birds and a whole host of other creatures. I wholeheartedly support this scheme and encourage everyone to host a Wilder Open Garden, whilst sharing a cup of tea and scrumptious cake (what’s not to love!). Together we can raise important funds to support Somerset Wildlife Trust’s vital work for wildlife across the county.”

**Joe Swift**  
Garden designer, writer and TV presenter

# Wilder Open Gardens

## A fundraiser for Somerset Wildlife Trust

Is your garden full of wildlife?

Have you given wildlife a helping hand?

If yes, would you host a Wilder Open Garden to raise funds for Somerset Wildlife Trust?

With an estimated 124,500 private gardens in Somerset, these spaces are hugely important for nature.

No matter how large or small your outdoor space is, we want YOU to invite your friends, family, neighbours and local community to your Wilder Garden to inspire others to garden for wildlife too! And, if you were to include a little tea and cake, you'll raise vital funds for wildlife at the same time.

Our Wilder Open Garden scheme is easy to take part in and provides a wilder alternative to the normal charity coffee morning fundraiser. We've picked the brains of our hosts to fill this pack with their best, tried and tested tips and advice to how you can host your own Wilder Open Garden.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch by calling me on **01823 652404** or emailing [fundraising@somersetwildlife.org](mailto:fundraising@somersetwildlife.org).

Together we can act now to stop wildlife decline in its tracks. Open your gate, put the kettle on and show off your Wilder Open Garden this year!

Thank you for helping to create a Wilder Somerset.

*Kate*

**Kate Wilson**  
Community Fundraising Manager



# Planning your Wilder Open Garden

## What type of garden

No matter what size your garden is, from small balcony gardens to large private estates, and everything in between, so long as it has at least one feature that's great for wildlife, we'd love you to share it with others. This could be an insect hotel, a mini pond or perhaps seasonal planting for pollinators - whatever it is, it can inspire someone else to help wildlife in their own garden.

It's not just gardens that are invited to take part - all outdoor community spaces are important to help wildlife thrive - allotments, school grounds and churchyards, all are invited to take part.

## When to open your garden

Whenever you choose! Perhaps you have some seasonal splendours such as Snowdrops or Bluebells, or magical wildflowers? Or perhaps your garden displays the rich colours of Autumn? Most people open their gardens for a day or an afternoon, or you may prefer to open yours for a few hours, a weekend or several times through the year. The choice is yours.

## Village opening

Your neighbours might also have some wildlife-friendly features in their own gardens. Could you encourage them to open their gardens on the same day, to encourage others in your community to garden for wildlife too?

## Private tours

Some garden hosts prefer to offer private garden tours by prior arrangement, inviting local garden clubs, horticultural societies, and other groups and societies, and arranging the donation in advance.

## Do you already open your garden to the public?

If you already open your garden to the public, a proportion of your takings could be donated to the Trust. Get in touch with us for details by emailing [fundraising@somersetwildlife.org](mailto:fundraising@somersetwildlife.org)

# Sharing your wildlife gardening tips

Wilder Open Garden hosts have used various ways to share their advice, as they often find that they don't get to speak to all their guests:

- A board showing the current plants and features of interest and recent wildlife sightings.
- An information sheet describing the wildlife-friendly features in your garden with an accompanying hand-drawn map.
- Signs around the garden noting key wildlife-friendly features.

Browse our wildlife gardening tips and printable guides at [www.somersetwildlife.org/get-involved/at-home/wildlife-gardening](http://www.somersetwildlife.org/get-involved/at-home/wildlife-gardening)

If you'd like advice on anything to do with gardening for wildlife, you can request personalised advice from our team of Wilder Gardening Champions. Request advice or a visit at [www.somersetwildlife.org/get-involved/at-home/wildlife-gardening/request-advice-garden-visit](http://www.somersetwildlife.org/get-involved/at-home/wildlife-gardening/request-advice-garden-visit)

# Resources

Download your Wilder Open Gardens  
resources at

[www.somersetwildlife.org/wilder-open-gardens](http://www.somersetwildlife.org/wilder-open-gardens)



# Promoting your Wilder Open Garden

You've set a date for your Wilder Open Garden, so now's the time to start thinking about who you'd like to invite, and how to promote it if you're inviting the public.

- Our **template poster** can be used to promote your open day throughout your community. Village noticeboards, shop windows, news agents, supermarket community boards, libraries, garden centres, tourist information centres and pubs and cafes often have areas where they'll promote local events. Do make sure you seek permission from the owner before displaying any promotional materials, and please remove them after your event.
- Use our **template invitations** to invite friends, family and colleagues or to invite groups and societies such as your local gardening club, church group, Women's Institute or University of the Third Age.
- Use our **template press release** to help you promote your event in your parish news or other local newsletters and magazines. Local papers are often interested in charitable stories like this.
- **Word of mouth** will give your visitor numbers a significant boost, so make sure you tell everyone you know that you're opening your Wilder Garden in aid of Somerset Wildlife Trust.
- On **social media**, use the hashtag #WilderOpenGardens and download our social media images.
- If you'd like to create a private or public **Facebook event** to promote your day:
  - Log into your Facebook account
  - Click "Events" in the menu to the left of your newsfeed.
  - Click "Create event" on the top right.
  - Select either "private" or "public" event – if it's a public event, you can either set the event host as yourself or a page you manage.
  - Complete the event details, location and time.
  - Click "Create" and your Facebook event is live!
  - Most importantly – once your event is live, you'll be able to invite guests and upload photos and updates to get people excited about it!



## Resources

Download your promotional resources at  
[www.somersetwildlife.org/wilder-open-gardens](http://www.somersetwildlife.org/wilder-open-gardens)

# Raising money

Some hosts open their wildlife gardens year after year to inspire others to garden for wildlife whilst raising funds to protect our wildlife and wild places. Here are some of their top tips and fundraising ideas to help you raise as much as you can, whilst having fun at the same time.



## Put the kettle on

Everyone loves a cuppa and cake, especially when it's for a cause. Ask friends, family, local groups and businesses if they could donate cakes for your fundraiser. Supermarkets often donate things like clotted cream and jam. Or, freeze homemade cakes ahead of your event. Contact your church or village hall who may lend you a hot water urn and crockery.

## Host a plant stall

About a third of funds raised from Wilder Open Gardens come from plant stalls, and they're great for attracting guests to your garden. Some hosts sell plants and cuttings from their own gardens and from those donated by friends and neighbours, others write to their local garden centres and nurseries who often donate plants.

For larger events, sometimes garden centres may prefer to hold their own stall. In which case, please ask them to donate either a percentage of sales or a minimum of £20. Stallholders run by a business must hold their own public and product liability insurance.



## Entry fees and donations

We recommend a minimum donation of £4 though please free to suggest more or less depending on the size of your garden, and free entry for accompanied children.

It's helpful to find a volunteer to collect donations at the gate, and to record the number of people attending. Sometimes change is required so a float is useful.

A lot of people no longer carry cash, so it's a good idea to provide your guests with a means to donate online. You can set up your own Wilder Open Garden fundraising page in just a few clicks. Go to [www.justgiving.com/campaign/WilderOpenGardens](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/WilderOpenGardens) click "Fundraise for us" and follow the onscreen instructions.

A lot of people will still donate to support you, even if they are unable to attend on the day, so don't forget to include your unique Just Giving web address of your fundraising page on your posters and invitations and share on social media.



## Tombolas and raffles

These are fantastic ways to boost the funds you raise at your Wilder Open Garden. There are a couple of things to be aware of. You must ensure:

- ticket sales and the draw must both take place during your event
- all tickets must cost the same – e.g. you can't sell five £1 tickets for £4
- children under 16 may not sell or buy tickets – if alcohol is a prize, minimum age 18.

## Matched Giving

One of the simplest ways to boost your fundraising is through Matched Giving. Some companies will match the amount you raise, doubling your total!

Ask your employer, or previous employers, if they have a Matched Giving policy. Occasionally, banks, solicitors, insurance companies and supermarkets will match the funds of their clients too.



# Keeping safe

If you're planning to open your garden to the public, you must take reasonable measures to make your garden safe. All you need to do is consider realistically what could potentially go wrong, what effect this could have on those present and what you need to do to prevent it. Focus on risks that could cause real harm and ignore the trivial.

There is some very useful guidance on the Government website.

Go to <https://bit.ly/3D4xMw8>

## Insurance

There is no law that says you must buy insurance for a community event such as this – but having public liability insurance may give you peace of mind. Somerset Wildlife Trust cannot be held responsible as your fundraising activity is not covered by our insurance.

## Refreshments

As a member of the public selling refreshments to raise funds for charity, you are not subject to the usual rules and regs. Though we do recommend you list allergens where possible and you need to make sure that you prepare and handle food safely.

## Security

If you are opening your garden to the public, we recommend you keep your house and shed doors locked, keep valuables out of sight, and never leave your takings unattended.

## Car parking

Consider the best place for visitor parking, in both wet and dry weather including space for disabled parking. Car parking signs are useful, as are signs to guide cars in a one-way system if space is tight. Also think about over-flow parking should you be busier than expected, with signs to direct as appropriate.

# After your big day

Once you've had a well earned rest and cup of tea, there are just a few things left to do.

1. Transfer the funds you've raised to Somerset Wildlife Trust.
2. Thank all of your helpers.
3. Take down any signs and posters.
4. Let us know how the day went - we'd love to see your photos!

# Transferring your funds



## JustGiving

If you've set up a JustGiving page you can pay in any offline funds directly to your JustGiving page at [www.justgiving.com/campaign/WilderOpenGardens](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/WilderOpenGardens)



## Website

Pay in your fundraising at [somersetwildlife.org/donate/community-fundraising](http://somersetwildlife.org/donate/community-fundraising) and select Wilder Open Gardens. Please let us know in the comments box the amount of donations made vs funds raised from ticket and cake sales.



## Post

Please make all cheques payable to "**Somerset Wildlife Trust**" and send to: **Wilder Open Gardens, Somerset Wildlife Trust, 34 Wellington Road, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 5AW**. Please include your name and contact details.

# Thank you

We can't thank you enough for hosting a Wilder Open Garden in aid of Somerset Wildlife Trust. We are hugely grateful for your hard work and commitment and hope you have time to enjoy the day and to talk with your visitors about your wonderful wildlife garden.





**Somerset**  
Wildlife Trust

**Somerset Wildlife Trust**

34 Wellington Road, Taunton, Somerset TA1 5AW

[www.somersetwildlife.org](http://www.somersetwildlife.org)

[enquiries@somersetwildlife.org](mailto:enquiries@somersetwildlife.org)

01823 652400

Registered Charity Number 238372



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**