

Wilder Open Gardens Fundraising Pack

**Tea, cake and
wildlife-friendly spaces
to raise funds for wildlife**



In aid of
Somerset
Wildlife Trust



“ 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, outdoor spaces 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

A wilder fundraiser for Somerset Wildlife Trust

Is your garden full of wildlife? Have you given wildlife a helping hand? If yes, would you be the voice for nature whilst raising vital funds for wildlife?

With an estimated 124,500 private gardens in Somerset, plus ancient church yards, school grounds and other community spaces, these areas are hugely important for nature. Between us all, we have the hands-on knowledge to help others transform these spaces to wildlife havens.

No matter how large or small your outdoor space is, nature needs 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.

Wilder Open Gardens is easy to take part in and provides a wilder alternative to the normal charity coffee morning fundraiser, whilst spreading the word about gardening for wildlife. 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 emailing **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.

The Fundraising Team



Planning your Wilder Open Garden

WHAT TYPE OF OUTDOOR SPACE?

From small balcony gardens to large private estates, from school grounds to burial grounds, to community spaces like allotments and everything in between, so long as it has at least one feature that's good for wildlife. Whether that's by planting more pollinator-friendly flowers, adding a pond to your garden, reducing light pollution, adding a hedgehog hole to your fence, or making your own bug hotel, we'd love you to share it with others.

WHEN TO OPEN YOUR GARDEN?

Whenever you choose! Perhaps you have some seasonal splendours such as snowdrops or bluebells, or magical wildflowers? Or perhaps you want to celebrate the rich colours of autumn?

Most people open their wildlife-friendly spaces 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.

GROUP OPENING

Your neighbours might also have some wildlife-friendly features in their own gardens, or perhaps your local church yard is managed with wildlife in mind, or does your local school have areas for wildlife? Or perhaps they are just at the beginning of their wildlife journey and you could share some tips and resources to help them.

No matter what stage they are at, 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 Somerset Wildlife Trust. Get in touch for details by emailing 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 – print our **QR codes** to direct your guests to our online resources.

Browse our wildlife gardening tips and printable guides at somersetwildlife.org/garden

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 somersetwildlife.org/request-garden-visit

Helping your local school, church and community allotments

Every small action you take for wildlife, once multiplied, will have a big impact.

As a champion for wildlife in your community, please share our resources to help your local school and church improve their grounds for wildlife too.



RESOURCES FOR WILDER SCHOOLS

For tips and practical advice on transforming school grounds into a wildlife haven that supports curriculum learning, check out our Schools Pack: somersetwildlife.org/wilder-schools



RESOURCES FOR WILDER CHURCHES

For example management plans for burial grounds, plus heaps of other resources, become part of the Wilder Churches community: somersetwildlife.org/wilder-churches



RESOURCES FOR WILDER ALLOTMENTS

Support your local allotment to apply for Somerset's Wilder Allotment Awards: somersetwildlife.org/garden

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 invitations** to invite friends, family and colleagues or to invite groups and societies such as your local gardening club, church group, or Women's Institute.
- For bigger events, use our **template poster**. 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. Make sure you seek permission from the owner, and please remove them after your event.
- If you want to let even more people know about your Wilder Open Garden, add your event to our **online map**.
- **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!

- If you've chosen to **split the funds you raise** with a local wildlife project, there are a few important steps to follow the Fundraising Regulator's best practice. You must state the split of the proceeds and where the funds are going on all of your promotional posters and literature. Feel free to use our template resources, there's space to add your split fundraising wording. Example wording:

"80% of funds raised will go to Somerset Wildlife Trust whilst 20% will help St. Peter's Church wild our church yard."

or

"We are hoping to raise £100 to help St. Peter's Church wild our church yard. The rest will be donated to Somerset Wildlife Trust."



RESOURCES

Download your promotional resources at **somersetwildlife.org/wilder-gardens-resources**



FAQs

Got a question? Go to **somersetwildlife.org/wilder-gardens-faq** or please don't hesitate to contact us by emailing **fundraising@somersetwildlife.org**



Raising money

Some hosts open their wildlife-friendly spaces year after year to inspire others to garden for wildlife whilst raising vital funds for wildlife. 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

Whether you're planning a small get together with friends and family, or inviting the wider community, 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.



TOP TIPS

Get some biodegradable takeaway containers ready so you can sell leftover cake towards the end of the day.

HOST A PLANT OR PRODUCE STALL

About a third of funds raised from Wilder Open Gardens come from plant stalls, and they're great for attracting guests. 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.



TOP TIPS

Many of our hosts sell their home-made jams, chutneys, eggs, whole cakes and other goodies to help boost their funds.

ENTRY FEES AND DONATIONS

We recommend a minimum donation of £4 though please feel free to suggest more or less depending on the size of your garden, and usually 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, 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 the unique Just Giving web address for 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, but 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, then minimum age is 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.



TOP TIPS

Our host Susan used our "how to guides" to make and sell feeders and nest boxes – if you're not handy with a hammer, you could ask your local Men's Shed.

Susan also used our themed sweepstakes to boost the funds she raised – download our "Guess the weight of the cake" sheet.



Keeping safe

If you're planning to open your outdoor space to the public, you must take reasonable measures to make it safe. All you need to do is consider realistically what could potentially go wrong, what affect 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 that covers organising a voluntary event: <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

For larger events, 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 overflow 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:

- Transfer the funds you've raised to Somerset Wildlife Trust (see below).
- Thank your helpers and let your guests know how much they helped raise.
- Take down any signs and posters.
- Let us know how the day went – we'd love to see your photos, so please share them in our Team Wilder Facebook group!

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



WEBSITE

Pay in your fundraising at 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, so we can claim gift aid.



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.

What next?

Here at Somerset Wildlife Trust, we are developing a countywide movement for wildlife. We're actively working to empower one in four people to take visible action for nature's recovery – the social "tipping point" needed for the majority to follow. Thank you for being a firm part of this movement.

We're awarding those who are making an effort to welcome wildlife, with our "Wildlife Garden" plaques, that you can display proudly as a useful talking point. Apply for your Wildlife Gardening Award at somersetwildlife.org/garden

Once you display your plaque and start talking about it, you'll get the ball rolling to become a Wilder Community. Find out how at somersetwildlife.org/team-wilder/wilder-communities

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 guests about how you've welcomed wildlife.

Further contacts and resources

- Find out how you can take action for nature in your local patch on our website: somersetwildlife.org/team-wilder
- Get in touch: teamwilder@somersetwildlife.org
- Sign up for our Team Wilder e-newsletter: somersetwildlife.org/form/team-wilder-newsletter-signup
- Join our Team Wilder Facebook group to find other opportunities to take action for nature across the county: www.facebook.com/groups/teamwildersomerset

