

Wilder

Open Gardens

Fundraising Pack

BE PART OF A
GROWING MOVEMENT



In aid of
Somerset
Wildlife Trust

Wilder Open Gardens

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Are you a passionate wildlife gardener? Is your bug hotel five star? Maybe your pond is a fabulous nature spa? Or have you created your own tranquil mini meadow?

Firstly, size really doesn't matter! We know that across Somerset, gardens of all sizes – great and small – are being transformed into magnificent wildlife havens. From ponds full of frogs and newts, through to flowering pollinator banquets and the most desirable hedgehog residence in the street, everything helps contribute to a network of green spaces that's supporting wildlife across the county.

You should be proud of what you've created! Why not share it!

This year, we're challenging the brilliant wildlife gardeners of Somerset to cast open your gates and invite friends and family – or maybe even your entire street or village – to come and visit your own personal patch of paradise. You can help showcase wildlife gardening, demonstrate what's possible and even raise some money to help our ongoing work across the county.

Our Wilder Open Gardens scheme is easy to take part in and can help raise essential funds for wildlife as well as spreading the word about the importance of gardening for wildlife. This pack is full of 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.

Thank you for joining a growing movement!

The Fundraising Team



“ 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

Planning your Wilder Open Garden

WHAT TYPE OF OUTDOOR SPACE?

It doesn't matter the size of your garden, what matters is what you've done with it! If you have at least one feature that's good for wildlife, whether that's planting pollinator-friendly flowers, adding a pond, reducing light pollution or adding a hedgehog highway, you're helping Somerset's wildlife and we'd love you to share it with others.

WHEN TO OPEN YOUR GARDEN?

You know when your garden is at its most splendid! Perhaps you're known for your swathes of spring flowers, or maybe you want to celebrate the rich colours of autumn. Most people open their wildlife-friendly space for a day or an afternoon, or you may prefer to open yours for a few hours, a weekend or a few times through the year. The choice is yours.

GROUP OPENING

If you're lucky enough to be surrounded by fellow wildlife gardeners, you might also consider a group opening. From private gardens through to community spaces and even church grounds, every green space can contribute. By opening as a group you can create an amazing community event where tips and information can be shared and people can really see the benefit of working together.

PRIVATE TOURS

Some garden hosts prefer to offer private garden tours by prior arrangement, inviting local garden clubs, horticultural societies, and other groups, and asking for small donations as a thank you.



TOP TIPS

Be ready to chat! Your passion is the most inspiring part of your garden, and visitors will love hearing what's worked (and what hasn't).

Sharing your wildlife gardening tips

On the day of your open garden there are lots of ways to share information about your wildlife gardening journey. You might not get to speak to all your guests, and we're sure people will be curious.



TOP TIPS

Think about your guests – simple signs, a clear route, and a friendly welcome can make your garden even more enjoyable to explore.

IDEAS INCLUDE:

- 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 – you can find some cards on our resources page for you to use.

There are lots of resources on our website somersetwildlife.org/wilder-open-gardens and you can of course create your own to help inform and inspire people.



Promoting your Wilder Open Garden

Once you've chosen a date for your Wilder Open Garden, it's time to start thinking about who you'd like to invite, and how to promote your garden if you're inviting the public:

Our [resource page](#) has some documents to help you:

- Our **invitation template** can be used to invite friends and family, or even groups such as your local gardening club, church group, or Women's Institute.
- For bigger events, our **poster** is perfect! Village noticeboards, shops, libraries, garden centres, pubs and cafes will often promote local events if you ask – just make sure to remove them after your event!

- If you use **social media**, we've created some images to let your contacts know that you're hosting an open garden – you could also create an event on facebook and invite people that way. If you're using social media, you can use the hashtag **#WilderOpenGardens** and let more people know that you're part of a growing movement!

And remember to spread the news yourself! Word-of-mouth is a fantastic promotional tool, so make sure you tell everyone you know that you're opening your Wilder Garden in aid of Somerset Wildlife Trust.



TOP TIPS

Don't be shy about spreading the word—your enthusiasm is contagious and will encourage others to come along and support your garden.

Raising money

Here are some top tips and fundraising ideas to help you raise as much as you can, whilst having fun at the same time.

Of course, our main aim is to create a buzz around wildlife gardening, but if you are able to raise some funds at the same time, it will also help our wider work across the county, helping protect Somerset's wildlife and wild spaces.

PUT THE KETTLE ON

Whether you're planning a small get together with friends and family, or inviting the wider community, everyone loves a cup of tea and some cake, especially when it's for a good cause. You could ask friends, family, local groups and businesses to donate cakes for your fundraising. Or, if you're an avid baker, you could bake some yourself! If you're hosting a large event, you could contact your church or village hall who may lend you a hot water urn and crockery.

HOST A PLANT OR PRODUCE STALL

Plant stalls are great for attracting guests. Some hosts sell plants and cuttings from their own gardens and from those donated by friends and neighbours.

You could even ask local garden centres and nurseries who often donate plants.



TOP TIPS

The above are all just options! Let yourself go wild. Croquet competitions! Pin the antenna on the butterfly! Name the teddy bear! Be adventurous and make it fun.

Set up your Wilder Open Gardens fundraising page online



ENTRY FEES AND DONATIONS

Some people ask for donations, while others charge an entry fee – both are brilliant options, but you may want to ask a friend to volunteer to collect donations at the gate, and to record the number of people attending. Sometimes change is required so a float is useful.

As a lot of people no longer carry cash, it's a good idea to provide 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. Select "Fundraise for us" and follow the onscreen instructions. Alternately, you can use the QR code on this page to go straight there!

Lots of people will donate to support you, even if they can't attend on the day. So it's good to include your unique JustGiving web address everywhere you promote your event.

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.

However you choose to raise funds, any money you can raise will be gratefully received and will make a big difference to our ongoing work.

Useful information

If you're planning to open your outdoor space to the public, you must take reasonable measures to make it safe. You need to consider what could potentially go wrong, what effect this could have on those present, and what you will do to prevent it. Focus on risks that could cause real harm or affect the most people.

There is some very useful guidance on the Government website that covers [organising a voluntary event](#).

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 corporate 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.

FUNDRAISING

If you've chosen to raise some donations and want to split funds 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 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."



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!



TOP TIPS

If you don't have one, you can formalise your brilliant wildlife garden with a Wilder Gardening Plaque! You can find more info at somersetwildlife.org/wildlife-gardening-awards



Transferring your funds

You can transfer your funds in one of three ways:

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.

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.

BANK TRANSFER

Contact us on fundraising@somersetwildlife.org and we will send you our bank details so that you can transfer the money directly.



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 or fundraising@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
- For telephone enquiries call: **01823 652429**

