

# Flourish & Bloom



Welcome to the summer edition of Flourish & Bloom, our Age UK Cornwall gardening newsletter. It's been a bit of an odd summer so far in terms of weather, with overcast periods interspersed with periods of scorching weather. This of course plays havoc with the speed of plant and weed growth and keeps our gardeners on their toes in terms of work schedules. Speaking of gardeners, the good news this summer is that we have been able to take on two new gardeners as our service expands. Ben Harrison, who is helping to provide cover in St Austell and Truro, and David Butler who is covering Newquay and surrounding areas. More on our new gardeners inside this issue.

Our gardener of the month is Meg de Greef, who works with clients in the Falmouth and Penryn areas. You can nominate your Age UK Cornwall gardener as gardener of the month, by either emailing me at [jeff.muir@ageukcornwall.org.uk](mailto:jeff.muir@ageukcornwall.org.uk) or calling 01872-266383.

More good news – the Falmouth Hub is having its garden redesigned with the help of students from Falmouth University. The aim is to provide a beautiful, welcoming garden that is accessible and will be a feast to our senses, with vibrant colours, evocative aromas that invoke memories, and gentle sounds of nature playing in the background.

I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter. As always, if you have a gorgeous plant in your garden and would like to enter our photo competition but maybe need help, feel free to collar your gardener on their next visit – they will be happy to help take that picture. Similarly, if you have a story to share, would like to appear in, or have an idea for our newsletter, please do get in touch using the number above.

Happy gardening everyone!

**Jeff Muir**  
**Team Lead, Age UK Cornwall Gardening Service**

# Welcoming our New Gardeners

With demand for our Garden Service soaring, particularly in the summer months, we are pleased to say we have taken on two new gardeners, David and Ben who are helping out in the Newquay, St Austell and Truro areas.

**Ben**



My name is Ben Harrison; Active Living Well-Being Gardener.

My first real job was as a gardener for Mid-Cornwall Landscaping, albeit predominantly hard-landscaping. I have always enjoyed being outside and was determined to find a vocation that suited me. After a career as an Officer in the British Army, serving all over the world, I returned home to Cornwall to continue 'being outside'.

I really enjoy the active part of being a gardener, but also being amongst nature, helping everything flourish and be in balance (not just plants and animals, but people too!). Every day is different and a new learning experience, meeting new people and discovering new plants and flowers in some fantastic gardens around Cornwall.

**David**



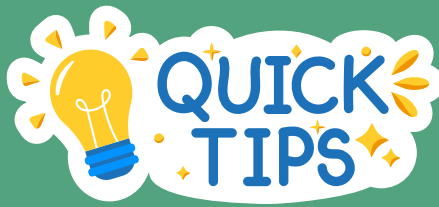
My name is David Butler; Active Living Well-Being Gardener. I

started my career as a carpenter, and during this time an opportunity presented itself to join a wholesale plants and flower company as a salesman. My passion for gardening, plants, flowers and the outdoors fuelled my interest, and my career of 30 years in this area began. We imported flowers and cut plants globally, from small growers in Italy to huge growers in Columbia and Holland. This involved strange hours, getting up at 2 am and finishing mid-afternoon.

My life was never dull, bringing up a family and taking the role of Manager for my son's rugby team, and finding time to keep fit myself - running several 10k and half marathons. It was time to move on in my career and lifestyle, so maintaining my love of flowers and plants began, I started work as a gardener for various clients.

A move followed to spend more time with family in Cornwall, and we have settled in Newquay. I am privileged to have found a Job with Age UK Cornwall. It has given me the opportunity to work within the community, doing something I find rewarding, helping and assisting people to bring much love and care to their gardens, that are close to their hearts.





Summer is well and truly with us, and the incredibly wet Winter is thankfully now behind us. All around, plants are putting on growth spurts, veg is swelling and fruit... well fruit is a bit of a mixed story - some people have reported record growth, and some have had no fruit. What has been your experience of fruit this year? Get in touch if anything unusual is happening in your garden. According to the Royal Horticultural Society, garden resilience is the biggest trend gardeners are looking at this year. With the terrible drought and hosepipe ban of 2022, followed by the wet winter we have just had, plants do not know whether they are coming or going, and it's hard to know what to do to look after your garden and improve plant health..

**Never fear, there are some things you can do to help your Gardens Flourish:**

#### **No.1 - Get a water butt (or two)**

Having an off-grid supply of water is always a good idea. Not only, is soft rainwater better for your plants than tap water, but it's also a free resource once you have your water butt. You might be eligible to claim a free water butt from South West Water, visit their website [www.southwestwater.co.uk](http://www.southwestwater.co.uk) or call them on 0344 346 1010 to discuss your options..

#### **No.2 - Water at the right time of day**

Rather than water in the heat of the day, it is best to do watering either early in the morning or in the late afternoon/ early evening, when evaporation rates are the lowest.

#### **No.3 - Use mulch or bark in your garden**

Mulching borders, the top of containers, or underneath shrubs will help to reduce evaporation by up to 75% and keep water in the ground for longer. It will also help to keep the roots of plants cool, meaning they can focus on growing and producing, beautiful flowers rather than just searching for water.

#### **No.4 - Grow your own**

A wide range of biodiversity is always good for plant health, and an excellent way to do that is to grow your veg. Not only is it good for biodiversity, but it is also good for your health, helping to improve mobility and providing good nutrition through yummy summer plates. If you feel veg gardening is a bit beyond you, then ask your Age UK Cornwall gardener. It's what they are there for, and turning a corner of your garden into your walk-in veg larder is a win-win.

#### **No.5 - Climate Change fruits**

With heat waves and warmer summer weather becoming more of a thing, now is a great time to start experimenting with heat-tolerant fruit varieties, such as; grapes, figs, peaches, and even apricots. Many people are now growing plants associated with greenhouses outdoors - think melon, cucumber, and tomatoes. With a bit of imagination and a dash of daring, your garden could become your slice of Provence.



# A New Sensory Garden for Falmouth



The Age UK Cornwall Active Living Garden Team are working with Falmouth University students Phoebe Morris & Georgina Umney, to design a new Sensory Garden for the Age UK Cornwall Community Hub in Falmouth. Their aim is to create a beautiful and colourful garden for our clients to enjoy, which evokes happy memories of gardening through our full range of senses – sights, smells, touch, and sounds.

Both students have previously worked on interesting projects. Phoebe's recent project, 'Rewilding Architecture', in collaboration with the Cornwall Wildlife Trust, explored her passion for ecological and landscape design. Specifically, finding new ways of connecting people from all ages to nature and achieving biodiversity net gain.

Georgina has worked on sensory garden design before with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, and is Co-Founder and Director of 'Undergrowth', a Community Interest Company that promotes public engagement with the natural world through accessible site-specific creative events. Georgina works in partnership to propose, plan, and deliver educational activities and events, using the cultural arts as a tool to raise awareness for social and environmental issues and solutions.

**If you have any ideas for our new sensory garden at the Falmouth Hub do get in touch via email at [jeff.muir@ageukcornwall.org.uk](mailto:jeff.muir@ageukcornwall.org.uk)**

**Georgina**



**Phoebe**







Ann

# Hospital to Home

## Spotlight on our Services

**One of the key services that Age UK Cornwall provides is a Hospital to Home Programme, which has been co-designed with partner charities to make it easier for Hospital inpatients to return home to a safe and welcoming environment. Hospital to Home provides tailored support to people and families who need our help.**

As part of this programme, the Active Living Gardening Service provides help to patients who want to improve and maintain their gardens whilst the patient is on the road to recovery. Our gardeners tell us that they particularly value this programme, as it feels like the support they can give means so much to people who have recently returned from Hospital. Marie Blackbeard, one of our gardeners in St Austell, is particularly interested in horticultural therapy as a pathway to support people – the client feedback below highlights the importance of horticultural therapy perfectly.

### Ann

Whilst negotiating a challenging hospital stay, Ann was determined to keep on top of her beloved garden – and as you can see from the picture above, she achieved this brilliantly with Marie's help.

### Carol

Marie cut flowers from Carol's garden, so that Carol could enjoy them within her home. Carol's condition, temporary limited mobility, means that she couldn't see them anymore, so pruning was also important to maintain good views through Carol's windows.

Carol





# Know your Gardeners - Meg de Greef

## What brought you to gardening and why do you enjoy it?

My grandparents on both sides introduced me to gardening. They were all very good at growing their own food and I would help in the allotments. When I was very young, my grandma said she thought I would be gardener one day and it later came true, after plenty of other jobs!

## What is your favourite part of the job?

I really love this job, because I get to work in gardens and meet lovely people at the same time.

## What is your favourite plant and why?

I can't choose a favourite plant because there are just so many and I like most of them for what they provide to wildlife or their beauty or their history.

## What do you think about when you are mowing lawns or gardening generally?

If I've been stressed, I often would find myself in the garden because it brings me into the present moment. So when I garden, I often don't think about much apart from being in the moment with what I'm doing.

## What is your favourite gardening season and why?

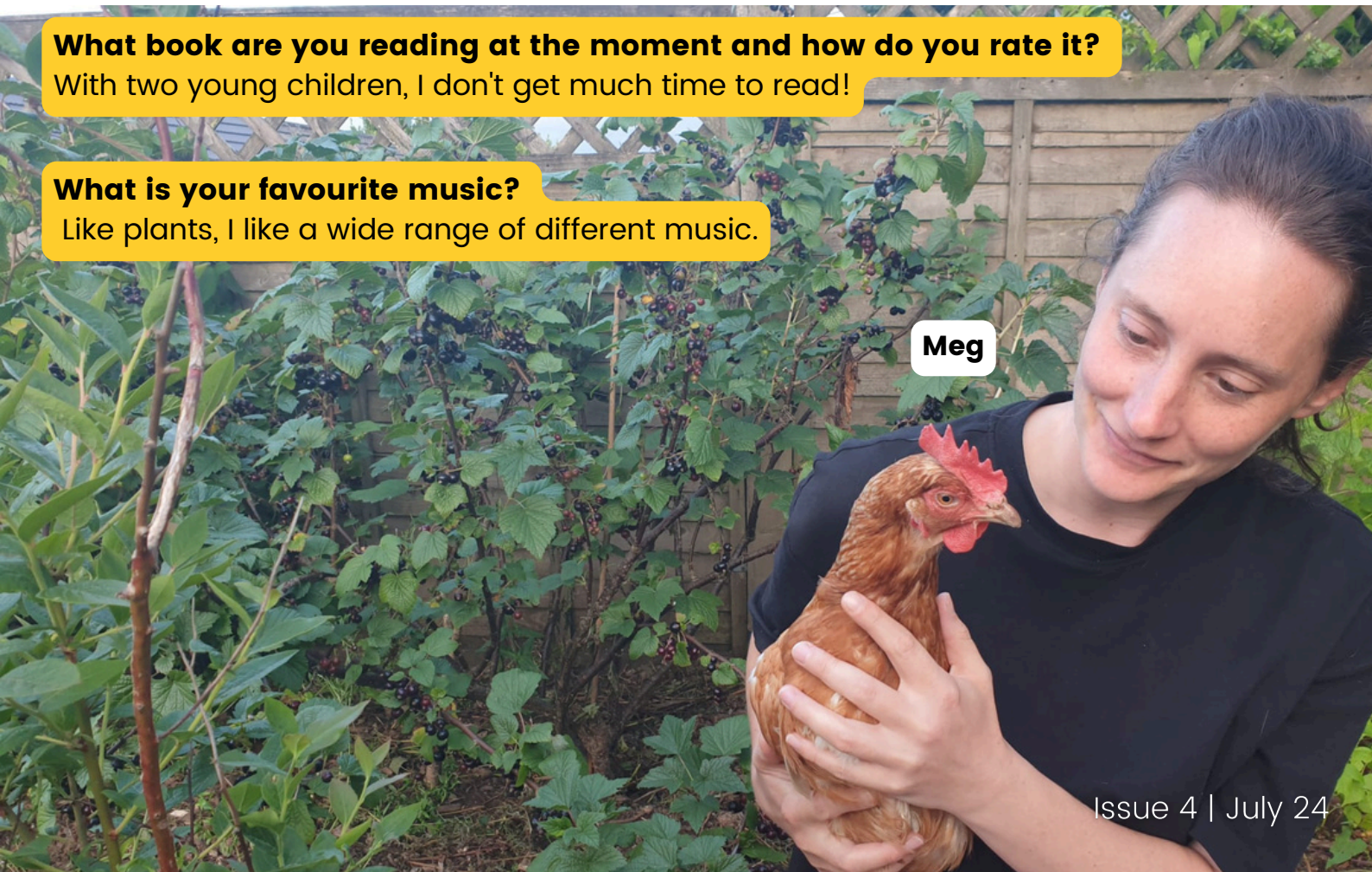
I love spring for the bulbs and new life emerging and I love summer for all the flowers.

## What book are you reading at the moment and how do you rate it?

With two young children, I don't get much time to read!

## What is your favourite music?

Like plants, I like a wide range of different music.



# Gardening Fun & Games

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## In the Garden

L W W R S E I R R E B P S A R X Z E M A M A D E  
D F E N N E L V L S E L B A T E G E V S T E A E  
I L O C C O R B U O T R I Y F E C U T T E L M G  
C Z S A S U G A R A P S A B I A E N W X O Y L N  
C P N P O T A T O E S P U D M N I G I M H J S Q  
B L A C K B E R R Y N C E Q H M I U A T R H O Z  
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G D Y E A T W N C R T D D S M V R H Y L Z N U N  
P C C K U S E L I M O M A H C I D U S B R Z T O  
S A T A Y D H Y G A R L I C Z M L R C S G T T B  
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D F V H R I R R H E S N I K P M U P E S N X L X  
I J Z O O Q K I W I K M D E S E L K C I P H B Q  
S J W Z I E O N I O N S Y A K Z T O M A T O E S  
H E N D R S R E P P I L C B A S I L L L I D W E  
L E A P P L E P M A R I G O L D J X Q L V A P R

wheelbarrow	raspberries	vegetables	blackberry	sunflower	sunchokes	cucumbers
chamomile	butternut	buckwheat	asparagus	zucchini	tomatoes	pumpkins
potatoes	milkweed	marigold	clippers	broccoli	pickles	peppers
parsley	oregano	orchard	loppers	lettuce	flowers	edamame
compost	cabbage	trowel	stevia	squash	shovel	radish
onions	leaves	garlic	fennel	carrot	thyme	mulch
roots	pears	herbs	gourd	fruit	beans	basil
apple	soil	rake	mint	kiwi	dill	corn
tea	jam	hoe				