

Flourish & Bloom



Welcome to the Spring edition of Age UK Cornwall's Flourish & Bloom! As the days stretch longer and the first daffodils timidly peek through, it beckons us to don our gardening gloves once more for a season brimming with growth and renewal.

Spring embodies transformation, and here at Age UK Cornwall's Gardening Service, we stand ready to help your gardens thrive.

Last year marked a record-breaking chapter in our story, and we are delighted to build upon that momentum with fresh ideas, vibrant new plants, and, as you shall discover in this edition, a new team member. Within these pages of Flourish and Bloom, you will meet our newest gardener, uncover ways to prepare your garden for the season, and receive tips on Cornwall's beloved seasonal blooms. We will also share updates from our community gardening endeavors and inspire you to cultivate your own spring produce.

As always, we cherish your stories and adore viewing your stunning gardening photos. If you have a cherished plant, a treasured gardening tip, or even a recipe featuring homegrown delights, please do reach out. You can connect with us through the Kernow Community Gateway at 01872 266383 or email me directly at jeff.muir@ageukcornwall.org.uk.

Wishing you all a joyous Spring of gardening!

Jeff Muir

Team Lead, Age UK Cornwall Gardening Service

Meet your Gardener

Say hello to Cat Horton, our newest member of the gardening Team. Cat is currently focused on the Falmouth and Penryn area of Cornwall but travels as far as Camborne and Redruth - you might even spot her in Helston.

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

My family has always been really into gardening, so I've grown up helping to grow vegetables and fruit, weed borders, etc., both with my parents and grandparents. I now have my own allotment and have thoroughly enjoyed growing and tending to it and experiencing the changing of the seasons in close connection to nature. I wanted to learn more about horticulture and get into this area as a career so that I can spend more time doing this and learn more!

Cat

What is your favourite part of the job?

Learning to identify new plants! Always keen to expand what I know. Often from knowledgeable clients!

What is your favourite plant and why?

Lilac. My family have lots of lilac bushes and the smell is incredible, they are a plant that I've seen much around Cornwall so it's quite nostalgic for me.

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

Often, I am taking inspiration from the gardens I'm working in for what I'd like to grow either in my allotment or my 'dream garden'

What is your favourite gardening season and why?

Late Spring, May time when everything is in bloom

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

Dracula, very atmospheric and spooky!

FUN FACT

If I'm not gardening, you can probably find me on my roller-skates!

What is your favourite music?

Patti Smith and Stevie Nicks

Seasonal Tips for Spring



QUICK
TIPS

Spring is a busy time for gardeners, and a little preparation now will set the stage for a season of vibrant growth. **The following Spring Top Tips might help you get ahead:**



Spring Cleanup Checklist

- Remove dead leaves, weeds, and debris from beds to make way for new growth.
- Sharpen and clean tools, ensuring they're ready for action.
- Check pots and containers for cracks or damage, replacing as needed.



Prep your Soil

- Test your soil's pH and nutrient levels for optimal planting conditions.
- Add compost or well-rotted manure to enrich the soil and encourage healthy roots.



Plan your Planting

- Early vegetables to sow: carrots, spinach, and radishes.
- Flowers to brighten borders: marigolds, pansies, and primroses.
- Herbs to cultivate parsley, dill, and chives.



Protect your Young Plants

- Cover fragile seedlings with cloches or fleece to guard against late frosts.
- Create a schedule for regular watering as the weather warms.
- With a little planning, your garden will be thriving in no time!



Spotlight: Spring Plants of Cornwall

Spring in Cornwall brings a unique tapestry of blooms, from golden daffodils to delicate primroses. Here's a guide to some of our region's iconic plants and how to nurture them.

Cornish Daffodils

These cheerful flowers are synonymous with Cornwall's Spring. Plant bulbs in well-drained soil and ensure they get plenty of sunlight for robust blooms.

Primroses

Perfect for shaded spots, primroses bring soft pastel colours to any garden. Water regularly but avoid waterlogging.

Bluebells

Often found in Cornwall's woodlands, bluebells thrive in moist, fertile soil. They're a fantastic choice for naturalizing under trees.

Tips for Success:

- Group plants in clusters to create stunning displays and attract pollinators.
- Apply a light mulch to keep moisture and suppress weeds.
- Visit local gardens like the Lost Gardens of Heligan for inspiration!

If you have any pictures of Cornwall in Bloom, please do share them with lee.davies@ageukcornwall.org.uk or jeff.muir@ageukcornwall.org.uk



Community Gardening Updates



Gardening Volunteers needed!

Do you love being outdoors and getting your hands in the soil? We're looking for friendly gardening volunteers to help keep our Community Hubs blooming!

Gardening is a fantastic way to stay active, build strength, and boost your well-being, without it feeling like hard work. Plus, spending time in green spaces is a great way to lift your spirits, ease stress, and enjoy a real sense of achievement. Whether you can assist with weeding, planting, or general upkeep, your help is welcome—no experience required, just a passion for nature. Contact volunteering@ageukcornwall.org.uk and make a difference today.



Gardening Club and Rainbow Fund

The Age UK Cornwall Rainbow Fund is reaching out for donations to support gardening activities at our Hubs, aiming to bring joy and enhance well-being for all our visitors. We greatly appreciate contributions like seedlings, plants, tools, or compost, which will help us create beautiful and welcoming green spaces.

If you're interested in volunteering or would like to make a donation, please contact **Jeff Muir** at jeff.muir@ageukcornwall.org.uk or call Kernow Gateway on 01872-266383. Thank you for your support in helping our community thrive.



Age UK's Victory Veg

Introducing Age UK's Victory Veg - because we're not just about lawns and shrubs! Growing your own vegetables is a fantastic way to stay active, enjoy fresh, homegrown produce, and feel a real sense of achievement. We know that keeping a veg patch in tip-top shape can be hard work, but don't worry—our friendly gardeners are here to help, from fork to plate! Whether you're dreaming of homegrown tomatoes, crisp lettuce, or a bumper crop of potatoes, we can support you in setting up and maintaining your very own vegetable garden. If you'd like a helping hand to get started or keep things growing strong, just reach out—**we'd love to help!**



Service Spotlight | You Matter



Pam

Pam has had health challenges and the heartache of widowhood in recent years. A retired nurse, she yearns to nurture her garden, just as her beloved husband once did.

However, Pam knew very little about horticulture and needed a helping hand. Pam was eager to learn, wanted to get stuck in; so we set about working in the garden.

We have visited the local nursery, and been busy planting & maintaining her garden - learning lots along the way.

Pam has shown a lot of strength, skill and determination, we both enjoy our gardening appointments together.

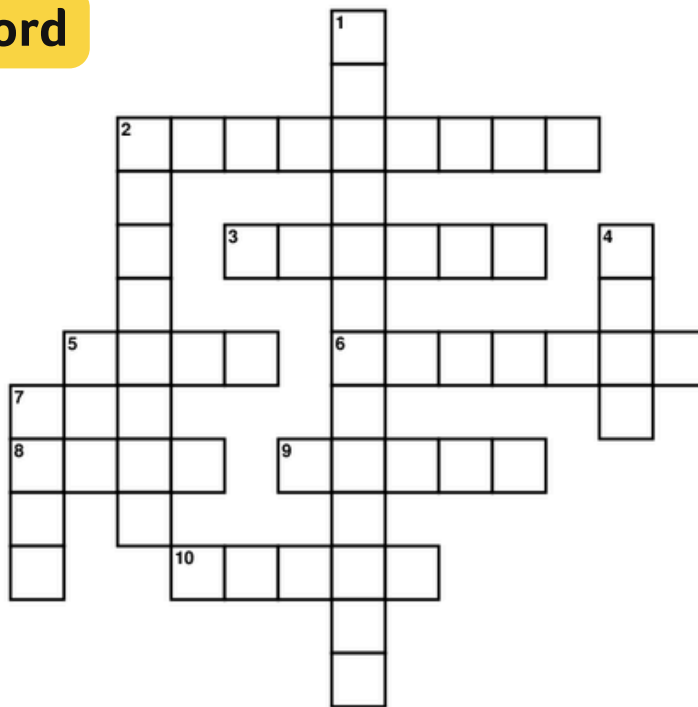


Fun & Games

Picture from the brilliant Helyn Jacobs.



Spring Crossword



Across

- [2] A puffy, white flower whose seeds are blown by the wind.
- [3] Plants, vegetables and flowers are planted in a _____.
- [5] This flower is associated with love and romance.
- [6] An arranged collection of flowers, that is usually held by the bride at a wedding.
- [8] This vividly colored flower shares a name with the colored part of your eye.
- [9] Lemon _____ seed muffin.
- [10] Two girls in the XlIs are named after this flower.

Down

- [1] This pink flower is common in Japan.
- [2] A bright, yellow flower with 6 petals.
- [4] The long, green structural part of a flower that holds it up.
- [7] This brightly colored flower is a girl's name and can be short for Lillian.

Riddle Corner

I touch your face, I'm in your words,
I'm lack of space and beloved by
birds. What am I?

