

At last it is the perfect time to get out in our open spaces and enjoy the goodness of fresh air, physical exercise, company of our neighbours and the wellbeing that we get from greenery around us. We are blessed in Somerset to have such easy access to a variety of incredible landscapes and public parks and now is the time to enjoy them. Footpaths are free to roam and the South West Trammer mobility scheme allows disability access to many beautiful sights for an annual £10 membership fee and small hire cost. <http://www.countrysidemobility.org/membership> 01392 459222 or email [info@countrysidemobility.org](mailto:info@countrysidemobility.org). Don't forget the surgery led Health Walks for company whilst you explore the countryside. They run across Somerset so you could choose one further afield from your own parish for a change. Try [www.visitsomerset.co.uk/visitor-information/tourist-information/accessible-somerset](http://www.visitsomerset.co.uk/visitor-information/tourist-information/accessible-somerset). Also use our link [www.somersetcarers.org](http://www.somersetcarers.org) for information about things to do in your area, Remember you can access the internet in the library if you don't have access at home or call our carers service support number 0800 31 68 600.

**Gardening!** Don't turn to the next page and dismiss gardening! Even if you have a tiny garden or budget, you can start to feel the pleasures associated with growing your own vegetables or flowers. If you are short of a bit of cash, try the discount stores and buy pots to put next to your front door or on your window ledge. If you have a larger garden save your grass trimmings with a discounted compost bin from Somerset waste [www.somersetwaste.gov.uk](http://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk). They also offer compost champions who will talk to community groups. Alternatively buy a grow bag, sometimes as low as £1 from discount stores, plant directly in it and skip the cost of pots!

So what can you grow cheaply and easily with plenty of satisfaction? I may cause some debate here because I am not a skilled gardener, but I love putting a few of my left over old sprouting potatoes in the ground and later digging up lovely new ones. It is like buried treasure! I also love to pop in some petunias which flower beautifully throughout the summer with little complication. As May continues, village plant sales appear. You can buy plants that have been brought on by more competent gardeners than myself at small prices to pop in those pots or grow bags.

Tools for the larger garden can be an expense. SHARE – a Library of Things in Frome hosts a wide range of items members can borrow for a small charge [www.somersetwaste.gov.uk](http://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk). Perhaps you could consider setting up something similar in your area.

If you are inspired by this, you may be interested in a new scheme from our charity. CCS has won funding from The National Lottery Community Fund to facilitate the first village/parish-based **Good Neighbour (GN) scheme** in Somerset. The scheme is intended to partner willing volunteers and helpers with anyone needing help with small one-off tasks, such as lifts to medical appointments, dog walks, or even simply sharing a cup of tea and a friendly chat. The aim is to bring people together and help build strong relationships and connections within local communities so that they can support each other in a neighbourly way. [www.somersetccc.org.uk/somerset-good-neighbours](http://www.somersetccc.org.uk/somerset-good-neighbours).



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I support unpaid carers in South East Somerset to connect them with community resources, support groups and personal support around benefits and allowances. We also have a team of Community Agents and Village Agents across Somerset. They help to bridge the gap between isolated, excluded, vulnerable and lonely individuals and statutory and/or voluntary organisations which offer specific solutions to identified needs.

We can offer advice and support to find local groups and activities available in your community. Please visit [www.somersetccc.org.uk](http://www.somersetccc.org.uk) and [www.somersetcarers.org](http://www.somersetcarers.org) or call me to find out who can advise you.

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