

CONTEMPORARY GREEN:

HOW DO WE CULTIVATE OUR GARDEN?



MODERNMINT

BRING MEANING TO YOUR GARDEN



A FREE EBOOK OF 100 WORD MANIFESTOS BY GARDENERS, CURATED BY MODERN MINT.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary Green is a free to download, free to share,
free to print e-book of 100 word manifestos
co-authored by garden writers and enthusiasts who answered the question...

HOW DO WE CULTIVATE OUR GARDEN?

Please do download and read this book.
Or save it, copy it, write about it, share it with friends,
laugh, cry and argue over what you read here from our wonderful writers.

It is our gift to you.

Money raised by the brilliant folk who have sponsored the book goes to

The Rare Breeds Survival Trust.

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An untidy yet erudite gardener once told me this:

'If you want yuccas, you have to have flamingos.'

I believe she meant that nature will tell you what goes together, so follow her lead. Also, you must be bold in how you cultivate your garden. Have fun, go to extremes and if an idea seems ridiculous it is probably the best one to try.

Of course, there was no untidy gardener. She did not exist, the story is not true.

But we do think the adage is worth remembering – if you want yuccas, you have to have flamingos.

DARREN LERIGO MODERN MINT

Darren Lerigo runs Modern Mint, a garden design company based in Essex. Modern Mint also have a lovely shop for gardeners and people who want eco-friendly products.

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**“IF YOU WANT YUCCAS,
YOU HAVE TO HAVE
FLAMINGOS”**

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MARY HAMBLYN

GARDEN BLOGGER

Mary Hamblyn is a gardening writer living in Gloucestershire.

She blogs at brookendcottagegarden.com

UNCULTIVATED GARDENING

Ours is not a tidy garden.

It is a family garden. It is a cottage garden. It is, increasingly, a wildlife garden.

In the summer it's a riot of colour and scent. Come November we mostly leave the borders to collapse upon themselves.

Finches feast on verbena bonariensis and rudbekia seeds all winter. In early spring, bees intoxicate themselves on the aconites spreading through the lawn. We're leaving a large swathe of grass uncut this year.

Sometimes our garden looks a right mess.

But it is loved. And plant by plant, bulb by bulb, we're adding layers to its fabric.

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How do we cultivate our garden?

Obsessively is the short answer. My brain rarely stops gardening, pondering undone jobs and unpropagated seeds even while my corporeal form is engaged elsewhere. At regular intervals it directs my limbs to perform the gardener's prow: hands clamped behind back, inspecting what's growing, what's succumbing and what's looking glorious.

My garden is cultivated with chaotic care - not for me the measured drill and mathematical precision. Instead it exists as a scramble of plants which suits some, and not others, abuzz with buzzers and alive with scents. It rewards by cultivating me friends and happiness (and compost stained fingers).

CAROLE PATILLA

TUCKSHOP FLOWERS

www.tuckshopflowers.com

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OUR GARDEN?

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HELEN GRAY GARDENER

Helen can be found at andthegarden.wordpress.com
and [@andthegarden](https://twitter.com/andthegarden) on Twitter.

Connection. Others may find it in music, religion or mathematics: I find it in gardening. And although I love them, plants are almost the least of it.

Love of gardening connects me to people across time, space, conflict and cultural divide. It connects me to every part of our planet, to the rhythm of the seasons and the passing of time. It brings both acceptance of my own mortality and the resolve to do justice to the glorious, floriferous present.

Carpe folium!

“ALTHOUGH I LOVE
THEM, PLANTS ARE
ALMOST THE LEAST OF IT”

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Trees. Shade for summer, winter shape. Food for wildlife and food for us, the wildest of all life. Host to lichens, bugs and feathered friends. Beautiful, calming, cleansing, life-giving trees. Wherever the garden, there will be a tree to make you offerings and bring you joyfulness. So next time you are considering a space, imagine a tree – and then imagine the legacy you will bequeath to so many forms of life, for years to come. Trees were there at the beginning and they will outlast every one of us. Cultivate a tree and you cultivate the very essence of being.

PAULINE BUCHANAN BLACK THE TREE COUNCIL

Pauline Buchanan Black is the Director-General of umbrella coalition charity The Tree Council, making trees matter to people in town and country alike. Find out more at www.treecouncil.org.uk or tweet @TheTreeCouncil, where everyone is always pleased to have another excuse to stop and talk about trees.

**“CULTIVATE A TREE AND
YOU CULTIVATE THE
VERY ESSENCE OF BEING”**

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MIKE DAVIES

CYCLING GARDENER

Hi, I'm Mike. I am self employed as a gardener. I use a cycle and trailer to transport my tools about, making me an eco-friendlier business.

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SURVIVAL TRUST

For me, gardening has become a way I can have a job that rewards me with a stress free environment - fresh air every day, no boss on my case, and an opportunity to make people happy by improving their surroundings.

I use a cycle and trailer to get from garden to garden - making me much more eco-friendly than my competition.

I've found customers like this aspect of my business, and frequently comment on how they wish they could be greener.

My answer to them is "why can't you?" Don't follow the herd - think different and do it your own way!

"I USE A CYCLE AND
TRAILER TO GET FROM
GARDEN TO GARDEN"

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I don't cultivate alone. My garden is the work of one human and countless other creatures that share my plot. Yes, I do the obvious jobs like sowing, pruning and weeding, but I'm just a tiny, part-time fragment of the workforce. The resident wildlife does the real graft: worms fluff the soil, winged insects pollinate the plum blossom and blue tits keep the aphids in check. They quietly get on with the jobs I couldn't possibly do. I'll never understand everything that happens, but one thing I do know is that without my co-workers, I would have no garden.

JUDITH CONROY ORGANIC GARDENER

I am an organic gardener based in the Midlands. I weed, write and everything in between. I have regular articles in Grow Your Own magazine and The Organic Way, and can be found on Twitter @JCGardener

**“MY GARDEN IS THE
WORK OF ONE HUMAN
AND COUNTLESS
OTHER CREATURES”**

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RON BATES

VEGAN GARDENER

Stock-free vegan.

South East Essex.

Estuarine gardening.

*garden - with flora and fauna above and below
herbage and wood all decompose
each season plant harvest and sow
with all weathers work
moderate with natural cycles
as systems increase heat and rain*

*observe all creatures
with whom we share our growing terrain
have forageable produce of a diverse range
fruit root flower leaf
our yield is all this and more
simply enriched - least intervention
green manure seaside weed to restore
work with the garden's amazing world
and explore*

*in the year of the soil
herbage and wood decompose
for micro flora and fauna
above and below*

“WITH FLORA AND
FAUNA ABOVE
AND BELOW”

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Imagine a garden without grass. How dull and brown that place would be.

Lawns – manicured or shaggy are there for playing on, lying on, hiding in and pic-nicing or just gazing at – reminding us of green pastures beyond our garden gates where animals graze to make tasty, healthy foods for us to eat.

And grasses in borders are **MAGNIFICENT** – six foot plumes, incandescent waterfalls, seedhead fireworks bring life and joy to the late season and a feast for birds in winter.

Versatile, entrancing, tactile, beautiful, water-capturing and carbon-holding – an English garden should never be without its fair share of grass!

SARA GREGSON **TALKING GRASS**

Sara Gregson is a freelance writer who is passionate about grass – its importance in the production of high quality food, human recreation and maintaining life on earth.

Catch the grass bug by reading her blog at

www.talkinggrass.co.uk or following her tweets [@TalkingGrass](https://twitter.com/TalkingGrass)

**“IMAGINE
A GARDEN
WITHOUT GRASS”**

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PAULA BAXTER

MILL POND FLOWER FARM

Paula Baxter is a flower farmer and artisan ribbonmaker,
working from a smallholding in the Scottish Borders.

www.millpondflowerfarm.co.uk

In the fresh clean air of the Scottish borders growing beautiful, scented, seasonal flowers that have been treated with nothing except fresh air, clean water and lots of love. Flowers for parties, weddings, events or natural funerals, for special people and unique occasions. Growing to provide quality blooms, unusual varieties and truly fresh flowers, by the bucket, bunch, bouquet or stem - from a single glorious bloom to a roomful of blossom.

“IN THE FRESH
CLEAN AIR OF THE
SCOTTISH BORDERS”

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Stick two fingers up to all those politicians who want Fracking and GM crops all over our beautiful land. They can Frack off! Stick two fingers up to the multinational companies trying to ban natural cures such as herbs. We are all powerful, we are the 99% so if we don't vote for their crap, don't buy their crap like processed food and vegetables sprayed with their crap. They will be forced to change their stupid ways because they need our money. Buy organic or grow your own and live and long and healthy life, that will wind them up!

This book is kindly sponsored by Essex Arb

COLLIN **ORGANIC GARDENER**

I am normally a very passive person.

seeog.org.uk

**“THEY WILL BE
FORCED TO CHANGE
THEIR STUPID WAYS”**

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ROSY BEE

PLANTS FOR BEES

Plants for Bees www.rosybee.com

With an obsession to fill every space with the best possible plants to attract bees. My garden is also my research space so all the plants are planted in blocks of a square meter to enable us to compare which the bees prefer at any given time. Each year we dig up ones that didn't pass the bee-test and try some we hope will either attract more bees or flower for longer. Maximum flowers for bees also means maximum colour for the gardeners and the result is very attractive with bold areas of colour all pushing against each other. Echimium vulgare, borage, hyssop and heleniums are the current top plants and hopefully our findings will enable others to provide much needed bee-food in their gardens.

**“AN OBSESSION TO FILL
EVERY SPACE WITH
THE BEST POSSIBLE
PLANTS TO ATTRACT BEES”**

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Nothing beats the sight of a flock of hens enjoying life in a garden, or the taste of a home-laid egg. There is a wonderful synergy between keeping birds that enjoy your garden and its leftovers, their manure enriching the soil, and the poultry keeper enjoying the eggs the birds produce. Aim to give your flock the best life possible and as much freedom as their safety and your gardening ambitions allow, and you'll be rewarded with the best compost, well-worked soil and the most delicious eggs you've ever tasted.

FRANCINE RAYMOND HENKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

A long-time promoter of making more of your garden, Francine loves growing and cooking her produce, but it's hens that are her real passion.

www.kitchen-garden-hens.co.uk

Follow me @FrancineHens

**“THE MOST DELICIOUS
EGGS YOU’VE
EVER TASTED”**

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EILEEN PECK

ORGANIC GARDENER

I am retired and live in South East Essex. I am of an age where I occasionally get a gardener to help with the heavy work and where I'm changing my garden a bit to make it less labour intensive. I also enjoy working on a local community allotment. www.looksliketheworldsmad.blogspot.co.uk

Gardening is a link with the past and a gift for the future.

I remember wandering down the garden path knee-high to my mum as she weeded the flower beds and all those Sunday visitors who sat admiring our 100ft suburban plot as they sipped their tea.

When my grandchildren visit I encourage them to pick the fruit, help plant some seeds or climb the old tree which is just right for their little legs

For me gardening is a constant in a changing world and it's my own special patch of earth which I can enjoy, protect and nourish.

**“GARDENING IS A
CONSTANT IN A
CHANGING WORLD”**

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“The mud will be lawn again. With a football mad son planting will be up the walls mimicking the ever heightening London landscape and must enjoy being pruned by stray footballs. The lawn will be re-seeded regularly, we have a dog. Gardens are best when used. When they become family. Precious but not so children can’t play and mistakes can’t be laughed at. I want a tree. A tree would be nice. Always the last room of the house to be finished and the one we spend most time in and walk through, we have a back gate!”

MICHAEL JARVIS NATURAL URBAN GARDENERS

Michael Jarvis, The Gardening Guru at NUGs (Natural Urban Gardeners). We love all things natural, organic, sustainable.

Follow us @NUGsTweet

“I WANT A TREE.
A TREE WOULD BE
NICE.”

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SHEILA HUME

BLUE HEN FLOWERS

www.bluehenflowers.com

I keep chickens and pigs which is a wonderfully productive partnership with flower farming.

The well-rotted chicken compost is spread on the beds and egg shells, baked in the oven and then shattered, surround the delphiniums to deter the slugs.

As the pigs go off to the abattoir in the autumn, the straw from their sty is ready just in time to cover the dahlias to protect them from the frost.

The reward for my two and four legged accomplices is the never ending supply of weeds.

There is something wonderfully circular about the interplay between them. It truly is the rhythm of life in action.

**“IT TRULY IS THE
RHYTHM OF LIFE
IN ACTION”**

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I had the choice which way to cultivate. I wandered one day into our local hardware shop. I wanted a cure for gooseberry mildew. I bemusedly came out clutching a little packet. It sat, unused, at the back of the greenhouse for several years, until I safely disposed of it. Later on, I read that there was a link with this and eye deformities in children.

Then, just by reading two books during a wet week's holiday, "Gardening without Chemicals" by Jack Temple and "Silent Spring" by Rachel Carson, all that changed.

'SEEOG' was born. We all have that choice.

This book is kindly sponsored by
Home-Start Chelmsford

CAROLE SHORNEY

SOUTH EAST ESSEX

ORGANIC GARDENERS

seeog.org.uk

I HAD THE CHOICE
WHICH WAY TO
CULTIVATE

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ANNA TOTT GARDEN PHOTOGRAPHER

Anna Tott is a garden photographer
aniatott.wordpress.com

HOW DO WE CULTIVATE OUR ALLOTMENT?

*'Actively, ambitiously, arduously, bettering, caring,
carrots, cauliflowers, celeriac, cherries,
composting, creating biodiversity,
creatively, cultivating our plot,
cutting, daffodils,
digging, enjoying fresh air, every flicker of the sun,
fastidiously, fertilizing, growing our delicious own,
hand-weeding,
harvesting,
in all weathers,
in muddy boots,
in our little haven,
in the greenhouse,
ladybirds, lavender, lettuce,
lovingly, meticulously, observing
organically, pesticides forbidden,
planning, planting flowers for the bees,
potatoes, pumpkin,
raking, regularly, responsibly, runner beans,
sage,
socializing, sowing the seeds of change,
spreading manure,
sprouting broccoli,
sweating, with a spade,
waiting for the rain to stop, watering,
we dig for nature's victory,
with aching backs!'*

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Window box, balcony or garden all wonderful theatres for nature to take encore after encore - but gardening is much more than just watching this natural parade, a gardener is part of it !

From the satisfaction of digging new potatoes planted last year, to hearing bees around roses pruned in the depth of winter there are just so many real primal joys for a gardener.

Whether seeding trays, or digging deep to turn over new ground, a gardener feels intrinsic satisfaction in contributing to nature's wonderful natural cycle. Although if asked, will just say "I just like growing things."

LOUISE NATURAL GARDENER

www.thenaturalgardener.co.uk

Twitter @NaturalGarden

**"I JUST LIKE
GROWING
THINGS."**

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ALEXANDRA CAMPBELL WALLED GARDENER

Alexandra Campbell is a novelist (under the name Nina Bell). She is also the author of *Upcycled Chic* and non-fiction books on interiors, a garden blogger and she teaches blogging and writing. She is an Accredited Coach for Writers (NAWE/Arvon/RD1st). Follow her on Twitter @midsizedgarden. www.themiddlesizedgarden.co.uk

Gardening now is less about control and more about harmony. My garden cultivates me. It cultivates friendships, my creative voice, and resilience - a dying tree is an opportunity for a new plant. It teaches me to welcome the unexpected – brilliant green self-seeded parsley and random fushchia splashes of wild gladioli punctuate the planned planting.

Gardening is pain relief. In the darkest night, reading about the repetitive rhythms of summer grasses, cloudy clumps of shell-pink poppies, purple salvia and silvery cardoons soothes the knots in my mind and body.

I cultivate our garden as an open space for the mind.

“MY GARDEN
CULTIVATES ME”

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When the flower blossoms, the bee will come.
Srikumar Rao.

Succinct and, almost, true. The problem bees and pollinators have is that they are becoming more and more reliant on flowers in your garden. Meadows and hedgerows are disappearing in the countryside, forage is becoming more scarce.

Not all flowers are the same. Bees prefer ‘proper’ flowers that produce nectar and pollen, not sterile F1 gaudy blooms.

Cottage garden perennials, wildflowers, herbs, flowering trees and shrubs, that’s what they need.

Bees forage from March to November. Grow plants that flower throughout this time. Bees have food, the garden has interest.

RICHARD ESSEX BEES

We site and manage honeybee hives at numerous locations, promote the importance of all types of bees to anyone who is interested and extol the virtues of ‘natural’ habitats for pollinating insects.

www.essexbees.co.uk

**“WHEN THE FLOWER
BLOSSOMS, THE BEE
WILL COME.”**

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CHLOE SCRAGG

MODERN MINT

Chloe runs the shop for Modern Mint, and she is always on the look out for eco-friendly, sustainable and artisan products for the home and garden to add on.

www.modernmint.co.uk/shop

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“NATURE CAN PLAY
A PART IN A BUILT
UP AREA”

Being without a garden (I live in a flat) I cultivate greenery where I can. This currently comprises of 2 window boxes and several house plants. The window boxes offer an alternative view to tarmac and cars, enclose us in our home and remind us nature can play a part in a built up area. The juxtaposition of the natural world against the city - especially the vibrant colours of tulips in spring, or dahlias in summer, break up the all too familiar city greys and beiges that merge into one mass of dullness.

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Growing a garden filled with flowers and living sculptures begins with good soil. Spend time during the autumn digging and incorporating organic matter into your soil. The frost will help break up any lumps and it will improve the structure too. Be careful not to dig too close to plants as you could damage roots. Once spring arrives rake the top surface to smooth out any clumps in the soil as seeds will struggle and find it difficult to germinate and grow if this is not done. The three most important things you will need to remember is to water, feed and weed.

VICTORIA ROBERTSON GARDENER

I'm Victoria Robertson Amenity horticulturalist, garden writer for Essex Central monthly magazine, Epping horticultural society committee member & Copped hall gardener and committee member. Fruit, veg & flower prize winning grower. I love gardening in the walled garden at Copped hall. I enjoy growing gardening living sculptures too.

Twitter: @gardeningbyvr

**“WATER, FEED
AND WEED”**

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CLARE WEBB

BUNCH AND BLOSSOM

Bunch and Blossom is a social enterprise near Helston in Cornwall. Our founder, Clare Webb is a qualified florist and garden designer whose passion and vision has attracted like-minded others who have given up their previous jobs to work with her and we are now a team of three, plus volunteers. The garden is designed to support biodiversity and sustainability through organic principles and function as a therapeutic space. We grow and arrange organic flowers, whilst offering supported work experience to vulnerable people, supplying beautiful flower arrangements for weddings and many other occasions.

facebook.com/cornishcuttinggarden

Twitter: [@bunchandblossom](https://twitter.com/bunchandblossom)

We garden to bring joy through work; the growing of flowers without pesticides, air miles or exploitation, the chance for everyone to take part in meaningful labour and to cultivate what nature provides to bring flowers to perfection in our bouquets.

We garden to grow unusual varieties not seen in a conventional florist's, cut the flower from the plant straight into water so they last, and revel in the ever changing bounty of each season.

**“WE GARDEN
TO BRING JOY
THROUGH WORK”**

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If you love food, farming and wild things (as I do) then supporting our work at The Rare Breeds Survival Trust will make sure we can protect our wonderful heritage of farm animals by giving them a place in the fields, our 'gardens', for the future. These animals (sheep, pigs, cattle, goats, horses, poultry) make our countryside a more charming place, offer a vital genetic resource against an outbreak of disease and help improve the way we farm. They also make great tasting meat! Rare Breeds are our past and our future. Please support the Rare Breed Survival Trust

TOM BEESTON

RARE BREEDS SURVIVAL TRUST

www.rbst.org.uk

facebook.com/pages/Rare-Breeds-Survival-Trust

Twitter: [@rbstrarebreeds](https://twitter.com/rbstrarebreeds)

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CREDITS

The brilliant cover and book design is by www.when-it-matters.com
You won't go wrong using them to make and update your website.

Thank you to the authors for their generosity
in producing such great quality manifestos.

Thank you to the Chelsea Fringe for their support,
for the platform they give to the weird and wonderful gardeners of the world.

The Rare Breeds Survival Trust is a worthy and forward looking charity.
Do learn more about the work they do in the UK.
Rare Breeds Survival Trust

The book was curated by Darren Lerigo of Modern Mint. Do visit the Modern Mint Shop

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... download, post, share, retweet, like, save, copy, write or talk about it. Thank you for reading!

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Home-Start Chelmsford

CAN YOU HELP?

Home-Start Chelmsford is a local charity which supports families in need with children under 5 yrs in their own home. We are very busy with families asking for help so we always need volunteers!

Volunteers needed in Chelmsford, South Woodham Ferrers and surrounding areas

We are looking for people who have parenting experience, are good listeners, have warm personalities, like being around young children and can commit to visiting families for at least a couple of hours each week.

NEXT TRAINING & PREPARATION COURSE STARTS
September 2015

If you could help as a volunteer and wish to find out more, then please contact:

GEORGINA, NIC or SUE on 01245 421222

THANK YOU!

www.essexarb.co.uk



Essex Arb. Ltd is an Arb. Assoc. Approved Contractor. We are also Council and Trading Standards Approved. This means we achieve the highest standards of best practice in finished work, customer care and health & safety. We offer commercial and private clients a personal service designed to meet your needs; from hedge trimming to 24 hour emergency cover.

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