

The benefits of gardening are widely recognised. It can improve your mental and physical health. But sadly, the most common reason people give for moving into residential care is that they no longer feel able to cope with their garden. Below are some tips that the charity *Thrive* suggests may help you to continue looking after your garden and to remain in your family home.



- Remove or reduce areas of your garden that are high maintenance, such as lawns.
- Replace hedges with fences
- Choose plants carefully to avoid longer-term maintenance problems.
- Use ground cover plants to cut down on weeding.
- Control weed growth and conserve moisture in the soil with mulches of bark, plastic or gravel.
- Design the garden around hard surfaces, such as a Japanese courtyard garden, to keep maintenance minimal.
- Avoid very fast growing plants that will require frequent pruning.
- Grow vegetables on a small scale, e.g. in containers.
- Find the lightest tools with the widest handles, as they are easier to grip – to increase the handle width, pad it out.
- Keep your back as straight as possible because good posture makes gardening easier.

If you are a Thurrock Council tenant you are responsible for keeping your garden tidy. They operate an assisted gardening scheme for grass cutting for elderly and disabled tenants who have no one else to do it for them; however the Council recently decided not to accept any new people onto this scheme.

Papworth Trust offers a gardening service charging special rates for those who are over 75 or with a registered disability. They will undertake regular gardening work such as mowing lawns, weeding, hedge trimming etc.

Work 4 U is a service provided by the charity Thurrock Centre for Independent Living. They offer a gardening service for those who are elderly, disabled or vulnerable who have no-one else to do their garden for them. They will call beforehand to assess the work and are prepared to undertake regular gardening work. They ask for a donation for each work session.

Thurrock Mind offers a gardening service to elderly and vulnerable clients with 4-6 workers arriving to mow the lawn, trim hedges and deal with your weeds. They charge £25 per hour but with so many workers an hour is often enough! They also offer plants etc. from their nursery in Bridge Road, Grays. For more details call Age Concern Thurrock on 01375 389872

If you need to find a gardener Age Concern Thurrock may be able to help. Please call us on 01375 389872



Age Concern Thurrock is a registered charity no 1000274

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