

# Britain at Home

Competing with computers: Parents spruce up gardens to tempt children outdoors

2015



**LLOYDS BANK**

# The British garden today

The garden has always been an important part of the family home. Equally, playing in the garden is an integral part of childhood. When I think back to my own childhood its characterised by time spent in the garden, helping with the gardening, chasing butterflies in the summer or sloshing in puddles on rainy days.

Increasingly though, children are being drawn out of the garden by technology. The latest Britain at Home study of 2,000 UK homeowners by Lloyds Bank Insurance shows that over a third of parents don't think their children spend enough time outside.

It's no wonder then that parents have spent an average of £803 in the past year on their gardens, compared to the national average of £587. Making this investment appears worthwhile, as over half of parents value the time their family spends outside more than inside.

With technology distracting youngsters from fully experiencing the great outdoors, it's clear that childhood is changing. Yet parents don't seem to be taking this lying down, determined to encourage their children to have fun outside by creating mini playgrounds, complete with trampolines, swings and slides, in their own back gardens.

However, perhaps a different approach is needed. Spending quality time outside as a family, playing together, whether that be a family game of lawn bowls or building a tent is an excellent way to entice children outside.

At the same time, getting children involved in the gardening can help to cultivate a love of the great outdoors. Watching plants and flowers – planted by the children themselves – grow is a wonderful experience for them, and one that can be shared by the whole family.

## **Dawn Isaac**

**Garden designer and author of 101 Things for Kids to do Outside and Garden Crafts for Children**



## Contributors

Thanks go to the following people for their contribution to the analysis of this report:

### **Dawn Isaac**

Garden designer and writer

### **The Meek family**

Outdoor enthusiast bloggers

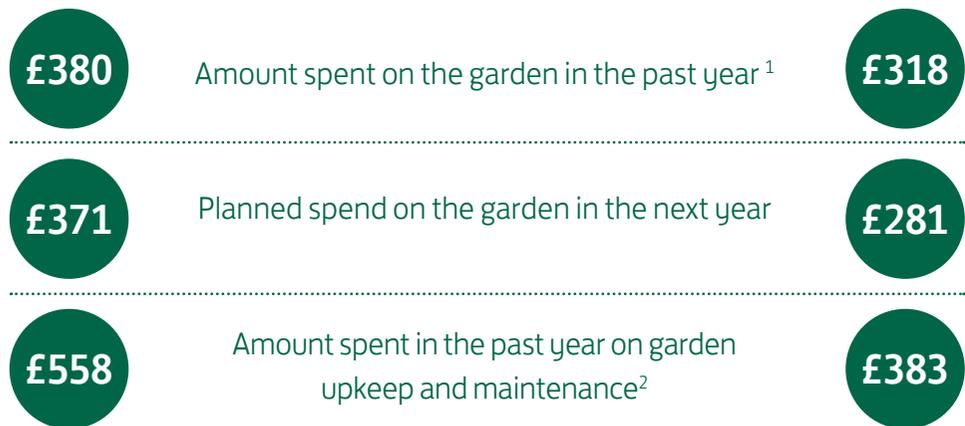
# What does the typical family garden look like now?

## Parents go on a garden spree

Parents spend significantly more on their garden than the average homeowner – and they aren't planning to stop anytime soon

### Homeowners with children under 18

### All homeowners



## Garden investments

UK parents are spending their money on creating a mini-playground for their children



\*% of parents who have bought this item for their garden.

<sup>1</sup> Includes: furniture, tools and equipment, toys, ornaments, landscaping, plants, window boxes, BBQ etc

<sup>2</sup> Includes: Gardener/lawn maintenance/Tree surgeon/Pool maintenance/Pond / water feature/ maintenance/ Patios / decking installation/Landscaping/Gardening tools/Gardening ornaments (e.g. statues, lights wind charms)/Plants / flowers/ shrubbery/Updating outdoor furniture/BBQ/Creating a playground for my children/Other

# Garden dynamics

## What lies behind the spend

Parents attempting to lure their children away from screens to spend quality time together



## The Good Time Garden

42%

of parents said time spent in the garden is quality time spent as a family



26%

of parents said being outside makes their family calmer



26%

value the time away from screens



25%

said their family laughs more when they're outside



# In search of outdoorsy UK

There is a significant difference in the time and money homeowners spend in their outdoor space depending on where they live in the UK

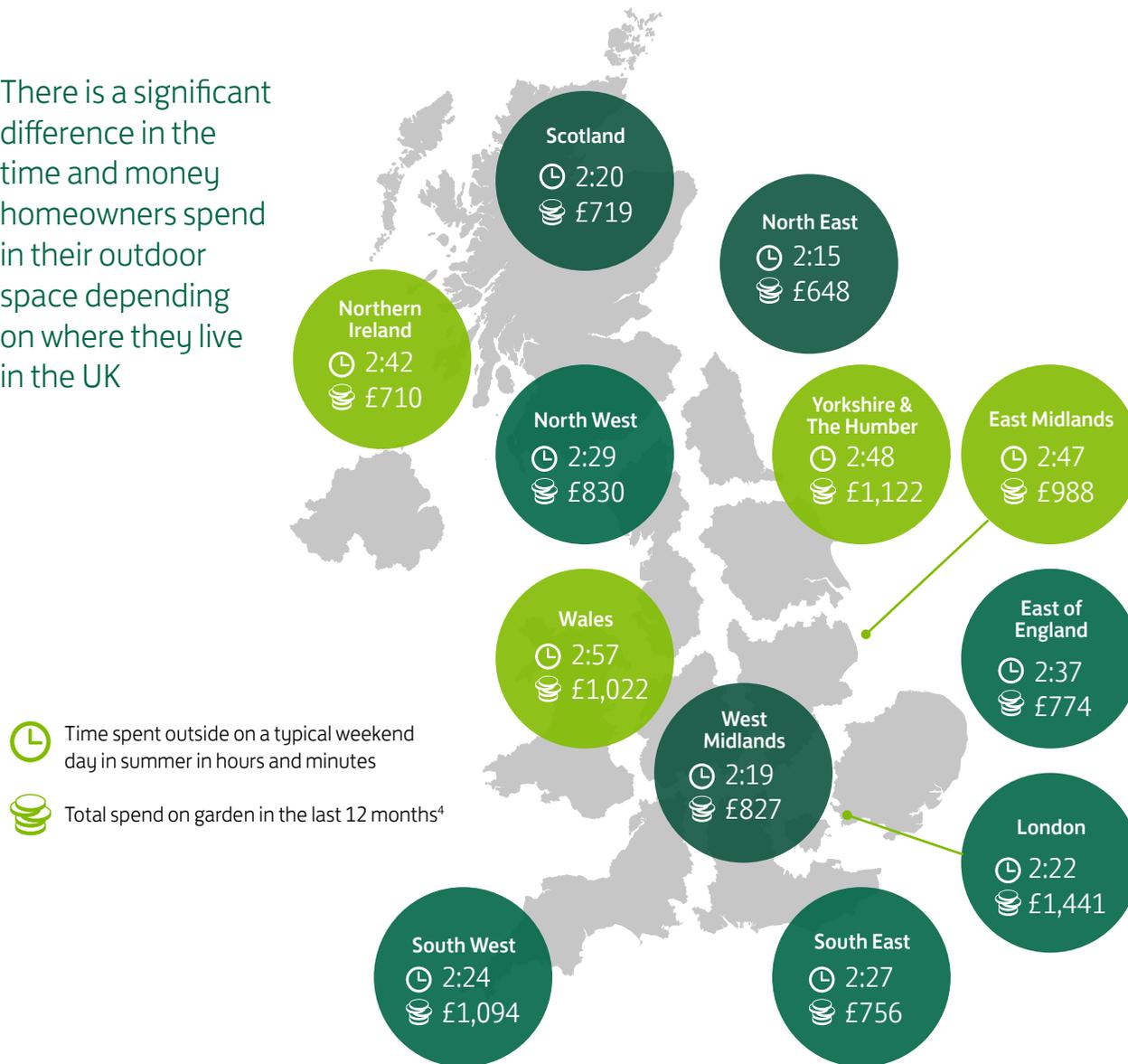


Photo by David White



## Inspiration: The Meek Family Outdoor Enthusiasts

The Meeks from Nottingham are one family who have really embraced the great outdoors.

Tim and Kerry, both primary school teachers, decided from early on that they wanted their children Amy, 11, and Ella, 9, to enjoy the same amount of time outdoors that they had growing up.

Stuck for ideas about family days out and interesting things they could do outside, the Meeks realised there was a gap in the market and set up a website [dotrythisathome.com](http://dotrythisathome.com) to share their ideas about how others could have their own family adventures at home and away – from conker tournaments to cooking with snow.

Now, the family are known as adventurists, travelling the country to get the most out of the great outdoors.

But for those looking for family fun in their own back garden, the Meeks have the following advice. “Your garden has to suit all family purposes, being a nice place for parents to sit and entertain people in, as well as for children to play in,” Tim Meek says. “Try to have a mix of garden furniture and flower beds, as well as spaces for the children to play, explore and get muddy. Whether it’s building a mini climbing wall or creating your own pond with frogs and snails, there are so many ways to make the garden a fun and exciting place for children to spend time in.”

# The investment and the disconnect

## Outdoor space worth more than indoor?

UK homeowners value private outdoor space more than a large indoor area, and those with children are even looking to move to get more garden space

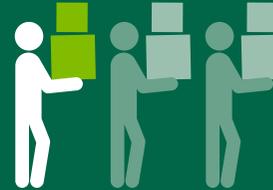
2%

of homeowners would opt for bigger house with no garden



35%

of parents would consider moving house to get a bigger garden compared to just 14% of all homeowners



Parents would pay on average £12,678 for more outdoor space, compared to £6,508 for average homeowners

£12,678



£6,508



## Security struggles

Despite the significant value homeowners attribute to their outdoor space and the value of goods in it, many are not taking adequate security measures

41%

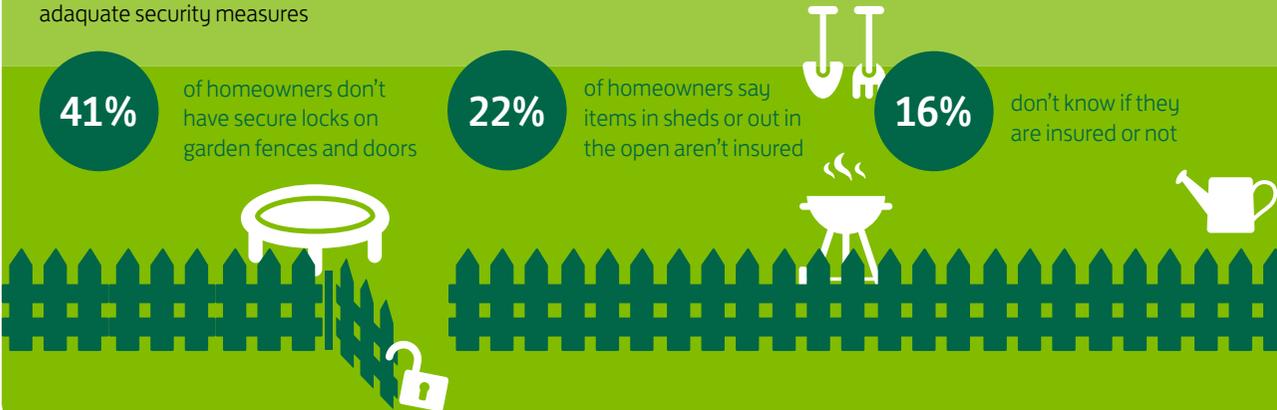
of homeowners don't have secure locks on garden fences and doors

22%

of homeowners say items in sheds or out in the open aren't insured

16%

don't know if they are insured or not



**Tim Downes, senior claims manager, Lloyds Bank Insurance said:**

"It's clear that our gardens mean a lot to us, and we're matching this with money and time spent to make our gardens a space that the whole family can enjoy together. However, the value of our gardens is often more than we think once everything from tools and toys to bikes, furniture and flower beds are taken into consideration.

With the latest crime figures showing 777,000 thefts from gardens and outdoor spaces took place in the last year to March 2014<sup>1</sup>, homeowners need to make sure that they are taking the necessary steps to secure and insure their gardens. It's important to check that your home insurance policy covers all the items in the garden, and to the correct value. Homeowners should double check that the garden has sufficient deterrent to thieves with a strong lockable gate, using the shed to keep items secured and out of sight. It's also worth protecting those assets it would be very costly to replace – including expensive items like climbing frames or hot tubs, and portable items like bikes and barbecues."

## About Britain at Home

Britain at Home is a bi-annual report commissioned by Lloyds Bank Insurance, designed to build a comprehensive picture of British home life and spending priorities by shining a light on the way we invest in and utilise our homes and gardens. The latest report explores the way parents are investing in their gardens and why, and whether children have a different attitude to spending time outside. This insight is based on research of 2,000 UK homeowners – and an additional boost of homeowners who are parents of children under 18 to bring this figure to 1,000 - carried out in April 2015.

## About Lloyds Bank Insurance

Lloyds Bank Home Solutions is underwritten by Lloyds Bank General Insurance Limited and has a 5 Star Defaqto rating. Lloyds Bank Home Options is underwritten by Lloyds Bank General Insurance Limited.

## Methodology

Research consisted of 2,000 UK homeowners – and an additional boost of homeowners who are parents of children under 18 to bring this figure to 1,000 - conducted online in April 2015 by Opinium Research on behalf of Lloyds Bank Insurance.

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