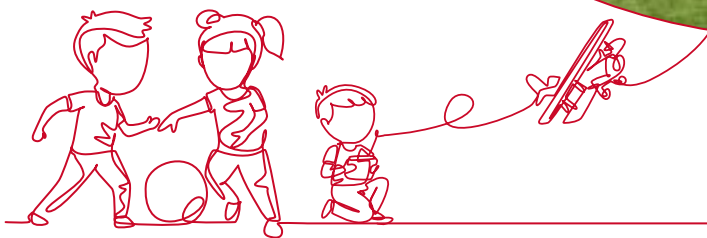


BREAKING THE GRASS CEILING

SECOND ANNUAL
COMMUNITY PLAY REPORT





THE STATE OF PLAYING OUT

Over the last ten years, the all too familiar ‘No Ball Games’ signs have divided neighbourhoods and pushed many families to seek out green spaces, parks and playgrounds instead.

However, access to safe green spaces isn’t equal. Over 5 million parents in the UK say their children have no access to outdoor play or nature spaces within safe walking distance to their home.

This has been particularly prevalent in higher-density, more urban areas such as Greater London, South Wales and Birmingham. It has raised concerns around children’s development, experiences outside, and their sense of independence and safety within society.

For the second year in a row, we commissioned research amongst over 2,000 parents, grandparents and young people to understand the barriers they and their children and grandchildren face when it comes to play and accessing nature. Two thirds of parents and grandparents say their child plays outside for less time than they did growing up.

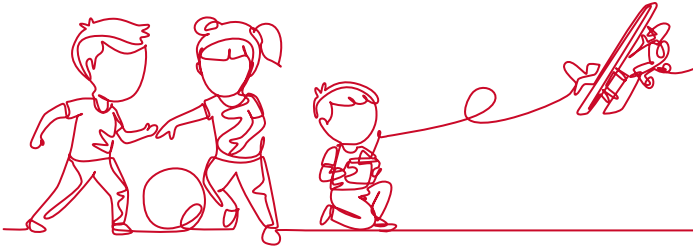
Access to safe street spaces continues to be one of the biggest reasons why playing out and adventurous play has declined so sharply. Almost half (46%) of Brits say roads are too dangerous for children to play safely outside, and a further 28% say there are no safe open spaces and outdoor areas within walking distance of their homes, this has increased upon 2023’s findings.

These views are further enhanced amongst parents, with two in five admitting their children can’t play outdoors independently because there aren’t safe routes for them to walk or cycle.

Over half (52%) are worried about the safety of society, and say this has impacted how much outdoor play and independence their child is able to have.

Beyond time spent outside, parents and grandparents alike are increasingly concerned the impending grass ceiling will have knock-on effects on children’s mental health and personal development. Two in five believe their children will lack a sense of adventure (40%), have poorer mental health (34%) and increased social anxiety (28%).

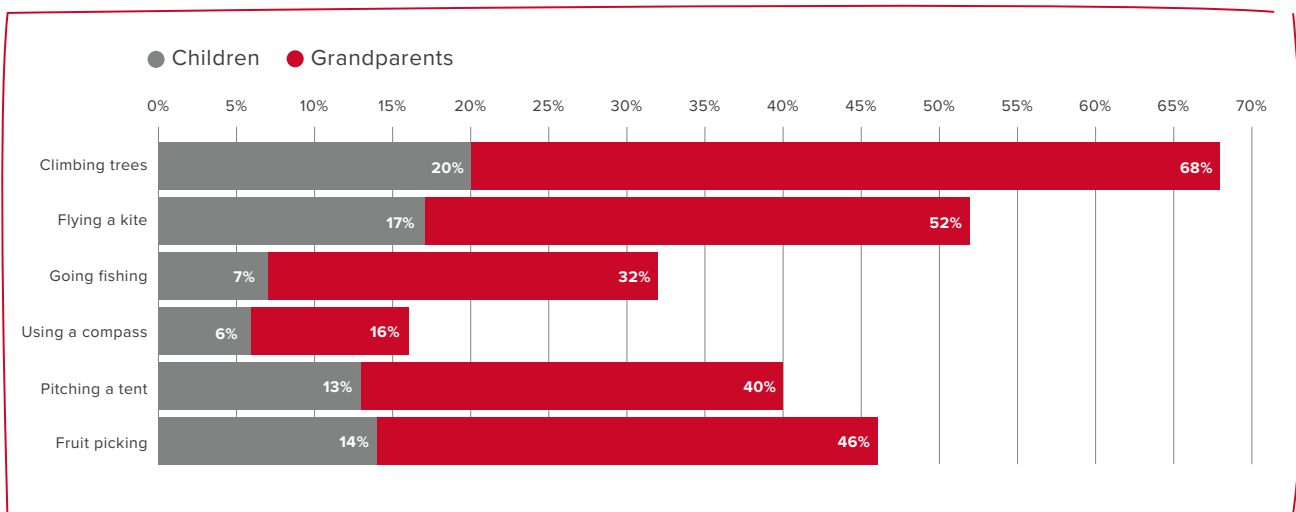




ANOTHER SKILL BITES THE DUST

Almost three quarters (72%) of people say their fondest childhood memories involved playing outdoors.

A lack of outside nature-based play has seen parents and grandparents reporting a decline in their children developing the same vital outdoor skills and memories.





BREAKING THE GRASS CEILING

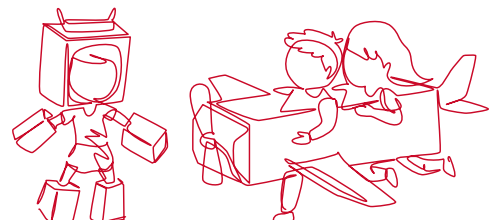
The importance of play in the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of children and young people has become more widely recognised in recent years.

Expert studies, including by many who have contributed to this report, have shown that play is more than just practising skills for adult life and is in fact, a behaviour that has its own fundamental development role. At its heart, play is something enjoyed and loved by children everywhere, and should be encouraged accordingly.

Across the generations, we can see a change in how children today play, compared to their predecessors, is impacting experiences of young people. **Well over half (57%) of Gen Z'ers say they couldn't name five common garden insects, and majority (88%) can't tell the difference between a Marigold and a Petunia, compared to just a quarter of grandparents.**

Parents do admit the barrier can sometimes start at home, with over a third (37%) saying they don't know how to inspire their children to play outdoors. A further third say they've never been outdoorsy and feel their children are missing out as a result.

Unsurprisingly, parents agree on the need to prioritise playing out and have a sense of the overwhelming benefits to outdoor play. Majority report a significant improvement in their child's behaviour following a dose of fresh air, noting they sleep better (47%), are less reliant on screens (37%), and are calmer (35%).



HOW WE PLAY OUT

Our research shows that how we play has changed from generation to generation. The top five childhood play activities include...



GRANDPARENTS PLAY ACTIVITIES

1. Playing outdoor games (78%)
2. Building a den (71%)
3. Climbing trees (68%)
4. Watching TV (62%)
5. Going on country walks (58%)



PARENTS PLAY ACTIVITIES

1. Watching TV (63%)
2. Playing outdoor games (50%)
3. Climbing trees (47%)
4. Building a den (45%)
5. Going on country walks (41%)



GEN Z PLAY ACTIVITIES

1. Watching TV (69%)
2. Playing video games (54%)
3. After school clubs (54%)
4. Playing Outdoor games (53%)
5. Playing team sports (50%)



CHILDREN TODAY ACTIVITIES

1. Watching TV (68%)
2. Playing video games (53%)
3. After school clubs (40%)
4. Going on country walks (38%)
5. Playing team sports (33%)



LISTENING TO THE EXPERTS: REDROW'S JUNIOR HEADS OF PLAY

Willow and Indy, aged 9, live at Woodborough Grange development in Winscombe and were appointed as Redrow's Junior Heads of Play in 2023.

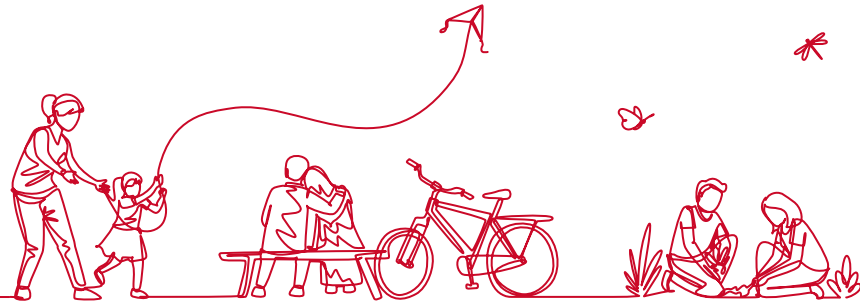
The appointment followed a nationwide search for young Redrow residents across the country to design their dream play area, and share tips and ideas with the housebuilder to help encourage more play across Redrow's developments.

Over the last 12 months, Willow & Indy's playground design has been visualised by the Redrow team's play area designers, with plans to implement this at one of Redrow's developments in the future.

Willow: "I loved meeting the play area designers and I am super excited to make the best park ever."

Indy: "It was really fun to make our model. I can't wait to see a real spinning rainbow gazebo and show our friends."





“ We strive to build amazing places that deliver a sense of community and a better way to live.

We take a holistic, Listen to Learn approach, when designing our communities and ensure that the engagement and community connection doesn't stop once the final brick is laid. But we want to do more. We want to help people connect, feel safe, and enjoy the communities we create.

Getting outside to play is one of the best ways to connect. It provides the building blocks for children's confidence, and gives them an opportunity to learn about the world around them. Parents meet other parents. Foster their friendships over a swing, a coffee in the park or kicking a ball in the field.

Whether it's a play park, a walking track, a community garden bed, or a bench to watch the world go by. In new communities like ours, these play and community spaces are more important than ever.

So we're taking a stand for play. We're taking a stand for getting outside. We're taking a stand for getting to know your neighbours. For picnics and Spike Ball in the park. We want to take a stand for community and we're going to put play and community connection at the heart of our developments.

At the heart of a Better Way to Live. ”

Kevin Parker
Group Master Planning Director at Redrow

“ Play is linked to good mental health; it helps keep our children active and reduces time indoors and on screens. Perhaps even more importantly, some of our happiest childhood memories are formed during outdoor play.

In light of worryingly high rates of mental health problems and obesity in children and young people, it is vital that children and their families are able to access interesting, good quality spaces for play. In truly child-friendly communities, children can gradually spread their wings and have everyday adventures in their neighbourhood as they grow up.

There are places where toddlers and their parents and carers can find fun things to do as soon as they step outside their front door.

Where kids can walk, bike or scoot to school, their friends' houses or the local park without having to cross busy roads. And where there are spaces for teens to spend time with friends whilst feeling welcome and part of their communities.

Interestingly, parents recognise the benefits of all these outdoor interactions, with over half of parents stating that outdoor play is good for children's mental health, physical health and social skills.

With many children now growing up unable to walk to parks and green spaces where they can play, developers have an increasingly important role to play in providing these spaces. I am excited to continue working with Redrow to help them create new communities where children can grow up playing outdoors like their grandparents and parents did before them. ”



Professor Helen Dodd

A Professor of Child Psychology at Exeter Medical School, Helen focuses on the importance and impact of play for young people. She has worked with Redrow since 2023 to help promote play throughout their developments.

CREATING YOUR PLAY DIET

When it comes to playing, we've worked with Professor Helen Dodd to inspire the play diets of children across to nation. From playing out to in, there are so many activities that you could do.



 <p>NATURE & OUTDOOR PLAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge walks Berry picking Bug hunting Community gardens Tree climbing Exploring 	 <p>DOORSTEP PLAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alphabet hop Chalk bullseye Conkers Croquet Hopscotch Hula hoop Kerbie Naughts & crosses Rollerskating Skipping rope Skittles Water balloons 	 <p>ADVENTUROUS PLAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tickling Building a den Hide & seek Jumping Dancing Jungle gym Climbing ropes 	 <p>SPORTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cycling Cricket Basketball Football Frisbee Netball Running Rounders Tag Tug-of-war Ultimate frisbe Tennis Badminton Gymnastics
 <p>IMAGINATIVE PLAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make believe Role play Games Dress ups Dolls Building blocks 	 <p>QUIET PLAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading books Writing Drawing Resting Boredom Art 	 <p>SCREEN TIME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Movies TV shows Music Educational shows Animated books Sensory 	 <p>FREE PLAY</p> <p>Children can choose their play materials, what to do & how they express themselves</p>



TIPS FOR PARENTS LOOKING TO PRIORITISE PLAY

Here are Professor Helen Dodd's top tips for parents and grandparents looking to encourage and inspire their children and grandchildren to Play Out and experience nature:

1. Level up your eye-spy game with nature bingo

Getting children familiar with nature and enjoying being outside is hugely beneficial to their development. A low cost, fun game to play is nature bingo. Head out for a walk and see how many you can spot. Even in more urban areas, you'll be amazed how much nature is around us when you look for it.

2. Go on a 'challenge' walk

Children respond well to challenge and adventure, so instead go on a 'challenge' walk. There are really simple ways to do this, such as providing children with a compass or map, explaining how they each work & having them guide you, or by choosing a more challenging route or longer distance than usual. You'll be amazed what children can do and how good they feel when they've conquered the challenge!

3. Don't be afraid to get your hands muddy

Garden time is a great stepping stone to getting the kids outdoors and gives children a chance to get their hands muddy. Whether it's your own backyard, an allotment or even creating a potted herb garden indoors. This can be a great multigenerational activity as Grandparents are often an excellent source of gardening information. If your grandparents aren't nearby, reach out to neighbours or local allotment owners, who can also provide valuable advice and tips.

4. Start small, even 30 minutes of outdoor time a day is great

In a world driven by tech, getting outside can seem impossible, but aiming for manageable amounts makes the prospect far more realistic. Start with an achievable 30 minutes a day as a minimum,

and build up as the summer goes on, don't feel downtrodden if there are days where this isn't possible - I'm a firm believer in balance. Making sure that kids have some choice over what they do, are spending plenty of time outside playing and running around, as well as having some downtime with a movie or book to relax, is the perfect recipe for your summer holiday play diet.

5. Plan & prep your outdoor adventures together

Letting your kids get involved in the planning is a great way to get everyone in the family excited and invested in activities from the get-go. This could be researching what's on nearby, finding green spaces in the surrounding area to picnic, maybe it's a new playground or an event that's only a short walk, bus, or train journey, from home. If you have family or friends in other areas of the country, challenge them to do the same and organise a trip to do something together if you can. Allowing your children to take a central role as their very own 'Director of Play' also adds a sense of autonomy and builds a new set of skills for them too.

6. Embrace boredom

Whilst planning can be great to give your kids some structure, allow your children to get bored. I know this may sound crazy, but by taking a step back and letting them be bored for a while you'll notice that kids are rather resourceful when it comes to entertaining themselves. Embracing boredom opens up a world of possibilities for children – maybe there an area nearby they want to explore, a cardboard box they want to repurpose, some flowers they want to trace – it can encourage a sense of adventure and creativity that is missing when all their activities are planned for them.

PLAYMAKING AT REDROW

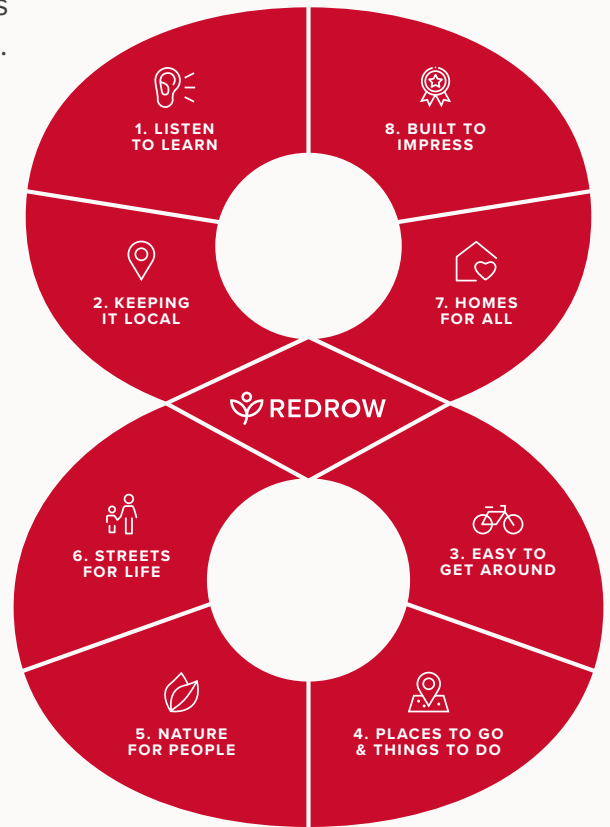
A large majority of children's outdoor play occurs in the streets and open spaces near their homes.

As housebuilders and creators of communities, Redrow is in a strong position to cultivate and nurture these outdoor nature play experiences, and encourage local governments and others within the industry to do the same.

As part of our **Redrow 8 Placemaking Principles**, we want to go further than the current minimum requirements to incorporate play and fully respond to the needs of our customers and the communities we serve.

These principles help us plan and design a happy and healthy place to live, which complements the surrounding area. They ensure we design and deliver to the same consistent high standard across every new development. We are actively working with experts, councils and young people to ensure there are safe, accessible and dedicated places for children, young people, neighbours and communities to come together and interact with nature and their environment across our developments.

A key difference in our approach to placemaking from last year's playmaking report is that on all developments we are now designing for improvements to biodiversity in line with our Nature for People strategy. This means that take a nature-first and landscape-led approach to retain important existing landscape features as well as providing new biodiversity assets. This involves balancing the delivery of wildlife habitats with access to nature for residents and provides exciting opportunities for creating multi-functional green spaces and corridors where residents can relax, play, cycle and walk close to nature.



REDROW'S PLAYMAKING COMMITMENTS

Following the launch of our inaugural Playmaking Report in 2023, Redrow have worked with a panel of experts to develop and deliver on the following recommendations to better enhance play and access to nature across their developments.

1. Prioritise play spaces being in easy walkable distances from homes.
2. Create and upweight Play on the Way and Natural Play spaces for children of all ages and genders to encourage physical activity and a sense of connection to their local communities.
3. Create multi-functional green spaces and corridors where play is integrated.
4. Wherever possible seek to capture the views of local children in the design of new play areas.
5. Encourage physical and active play through the provision of exercise activities for adults and teenagers such as outdoor gyms and trim trails.
6. Facilitate play in all seasons through events, partnerships, and creation of new spaces at our developments.
7. Actively considering the importance of safe streets when designing routes through our developments.
8. Regularly review the design of play spaces to ensure children can find new and interesting experiences that challenge and engage them as they develop.





DELIVERING ON OUR PLAYMAKING COMMITMENTS IN REDROW COMMUNITIES

Across the country, many of our developments showcase fantastic play areas for the benefit of residents and the local community. These include:

Heritage Fields, Nuneaton

We have recently completed a 'Nature Walk' through the public open space at the development. As well as providing a new high quality play area, the Nature Walk encompasses three different themes, including a grass meadow planting, community orchard, as well as a pond and local wildlife. Information boards are provided for each of the themed areas for children and residents to learn more about nature and the local ecosystem.

Frenchay, Bristol

Fantastic facilities, destinations and activities for a wide range of age groups. The new community includes a 'trim trail', tennis courts, a destination play area, pocket parks, picnic tables, allotments, a community orchard, a woodland walk and a new cycle route.

Stoney Bank Chase, Yorkshire

A new play trail has been created within an existing woodland. The play trail features various interactive elements to help children learn and experience nature within the space.

Penlands Green, Sussex

Our design and layout creates a beautiful focal green space and central play area for residents. This much-loved community space features a large mature oak tree, which is a key focal feature.

Cranberry Gardens, Congleton

A new high quality play area has been created in the centre of the development. Nature is the focus point of this play space, with existing mature trees and a number of retained landscaping. Wildlife habitats have also been enhanced with the addition of two ponds, which are habitats for Great Crested Newts.

Barton Seagrave, Northamptonshire

The network of large open spaces, natural areas and a lakeside play area makes this development a great example of an established thriving community.

Plasdwr, Cardiff

The impressive Gateway Linear Park forms the main access to this 7,000 home Garden City development. The front section of the park was recently completed, and features strong connections to nature through ponds and landscaped swales. Play-on-the-way features are also provided along the length of the park so children can stop and play within a natural setting on their way to the new primary school. More destinations and pathways will be added across the park in due course.

“Placemaking and the ability to play has been a key priority for us at Redrow in breaking the grass ceiling. We have designated open spaces for play and recreation areas across our developments, as well as play-on-the-way spaces and multifunctional green corridors. Through these interventions we are encouraging more resident interaction and fostering a sense of community, which is ever important when you're moving to a new home.”

Kevin Parker

Group Masterplanning Director



ABOUT REDROW

Redrow was established in 1974 and today is one of the most successful and acclaimed homebuilders in the country. For the year to 2 July 2023, the company built more than 5,400 new homes across England and Wales.

Over Redrow's history, spanning 50 years, it has earned a unique reputation for delivering high quality, award-winning homes that are built in well-chosen locations with excellent place making.

Redrow's purpose is to create a better way to live. It has a robust strategy in place to deliver on this aim, which is based on three core pillars: Building Responsibly, Thriving Communities and Valuing People.

Redrow was included in the FT's annual listings of both Europe's Climate Leaders 2022 and Diversity Leaders 2023 for achieving significant reductions in its greenhouse gas emissions and leading in workplace diversity and inclusion, respectively. It was also included in the FTSE4Good Index Series, for demonstrating strong Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) practices.

Redrow was also named in TIME Magazine and Statista's inaugural report of the World's Most Sustainable Companies 2024 as a testament to its continued efforts in responding to customer demands, enhancing its governance, as well as future proofing the high-quality homes and communities it builds.

Last year, Redrow became one of the first house builders to implement the New Homes Quality Board's new code of practice, an independent not-for-profit organisation that has been set up to offer better protection and increased transparency for customers.

Redrow is consistently rated as 'excellent' on Trustpilot and once again achieved the Five Star Customer Satisfaction award from the Home Builders' Federation (HBF). Visit [redrow.co.uk](https://www.redrow.co.uk) for more detail.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

The research consists of a survey of 2,000 UK adults and was conducted in June 2024 by Opinium on behalf of Redrow. Results have been weighted to be nationally representative of parents and grandparents of 4-17-year-olds, as well as 16-24-year-olds.

Parents of 4-17-year-olds in the UK equates to 14,726,055 so 36% = 5,274,647.

