

Green-fingered Brits ditch outdoor luxuries in favour of garden improvements

- Brits increase spend on landscaping, boosting property value
- As a nation the UK will spend £3.9bn on gardens in 2012
- Spend on garden accessories such as BBQs and water features down to just £27

Households are defying the financial climate and increasing spend on landscaping to spruce up their garden and boost property value, according to a new survey.

The annual **HSBC Gardens Survey**, published ahead of the [Chelsea Flower Show](#), found that Brits will spend an average of £83 on garden improvements, including landscaping, this year - a 10% increase since 2011.

The figure increases to £148 in both North West and South West England, compared to just £20 in the London, where many householders can only dream of a large garden.

While spend on landscaping has increased, the nation's garden budget as a whole is being reduced. The average spend in 2012 on general maintenance is **£37** (down 47%) and greenery including plants and flowers just **£39** (down 47%).

But it is spend on garden items such as barbecues and water features which has seen the most dramatic cut in the past year - down 67% at **£27**.

How much spent on garden this year?

	National average (£)	
	2011	2012
General maintenance	70	37
New landscape projects	71	83
New plants, flowers etc	73	39
New items such as BBQ, water feature etc	82	27
Total	£296	£185

Peter Dockar, Head of [Mortgages at HSBC](#), said: 'The UK has traditionally had a love affair with gardens, but with households facing financial pressures, people have to make difficult decisions about where to spend their cash.'

'The survey reveals that spend on non-essential items has gone down in favour of general improvements, including landscape projects. Improving the general outlook of the garden can not only boost quality of life but also help to increase property value.'

While the UK average spend on the garden now stands at **£185**, down from £296 in 2011, four regions in England buck the trend with higher garden budgets - the East Midlands (£253), North West (£240), South West (£239) and South East (£238) all spend more. The regions with the lowest spend are Yorks and Humber (£112) and London (£124). The total UK spend on gardens for 2012 will be £3.9bn*.

How much spent on garden in 2012?

	General maintenance	Improvements inc. landscaping	New plants	Garden items	Total 2012	Total 2011	Days in garden 2012
East Midlands	£59	£112	£50	£32	£253	£281	109
North West	£41	£148	£33	£18	£240	£236	97
South West	£25	£148	£43	£23	£239	£211	102
South East	£57	£101	£47	£33	£238	£237	105
Wales	£24	£91	£36	£27	£178	£466	100
Eastern	£35	£50	£44	£33	£162	£243	112
North East	£27	£66	£39	£23	£155	£306	105
West Midlands	£18	£76	£35	£26	£155	£265	94
Scotland	£46	£43	£33	£20	£142	£330	69
London	£34	£20	£35	£35	£124	£395	74
Yorks and Humberside	£23	£42	£29	£18	£112	£286	90

The survey also revealed that while relaxing (72%) is the most popular garden activity, over a third (38%) of households now use their garden to grow fruit or veg.

What do you use your garden for (%)?

All	
Relaxing	72
To dry laundry	65
Growing plants	64
Attracting wildlife	46
Eating al fresco	41
Sunbathing	39
Growing fruit or veg	38
Entertaining	33
For kids to play	26
Exercising pets	23

On average Brits will spend 95 days in the garden in 2012, including three days a week during the summer months.

Days spent in the garden?

	All	Scot	North-east	North-west	Yorks	West Mids	East Mids	Wales	East	London	S East	S West
Total days per year	95	69	105	97	90	94	109	100	112	74	105	102

Unsurprisingly, London residents are least likely to regard having a garden as 'very important'. Residents in the East Midlands and Wales are most likely to regard a garden as being a very important factor in their property choice.

How important is having a garden?

	All	Scot	North-east	North-west	Yorks	West Mids	East Mids	Wales	East	London	S East	S West
Very important	60	49	51	60	60	62	68	68	65	50	59	67
Quite important	29	40	36	25	23	27	24	25	28	41	28	25
Not important at all	10	11	10	15	17	9	8	7	7	7	11	8

Notes to Editors:

Survey sample: 2056 British homeowners (aged 18+).

* [Number of UK households is 21,407,000](#)

Link: www.newsroom.hsbc.co.uk/press/release/green-fingered_brits_ditch_out