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## **KEEPING UP WITH THE “MILLENNIUM JONESES” - DITCH THE GNOMES AND GET A FOUNTAIN**

Forget the stone lions and prize azaleas, one in five Britons (20%) say that if they could add one thing to their garden it would be a fountain - while it looks like the great British gnome is heading for extinction, according to a new study from Goldfish, the financial services provider.

With Britons estimated to be spending up to £3.3 billion a year on their gardens, and the rising popularity of TV outdoor makeover programmes, gardening is big business. However the research suggests that a new breed of gardener is emerging, those who are not content with merely tending their vegetable patch or pottering in the shed. The millennium gardener is far more experimental and is adding “designer” touches to the humble garden, for example 16% dream of installing a “Footballers’ Wives” style jacuzzi in their back yard.

Goldfish asked a GB representative sample of 2,000 people how they would improve their gardens, if they could add one thing. The results show:

### **Key Findings:**

- **From Trevi to Tregaron:** With Charlie Dimmock famed for incorporating aquatic extravaganzas into any size of garden, and the winning design for the Princess of Wales Memorial being a water feature, fountains are currently top of the wish list for UK gardeners (20%). The Welsh are the most “fountain friendly”, with over a quarter (27%) of the region dreaming of their very own Trevi fountain.

- **Hot tub:** Despite the vagaries of the British weather, in an ideal world 16% of people would choose to install a jacuzzi in their garden. This effervescent pastime appeals most to younger age groups, with almost half of 16-19 year olds (48%) and 29% of 20 year olds dreaming of an outside spa. People living in the West Midlands are the country's biggest jacuzzi fanatics (24%).
- **Summerhouse:** 14% of people would like to erect a summerhouse or pagoda in their garden, with women keener than men (16% vs. 13%) perhaps desiring a more feminine structure than the traditional shed. Northerners are the most likely to choose this option, Londoners least (7%) possibly due to lack of space.
- **Garden Furniture:** We all dream of the perfect summer evening dining in the garden, but only 13% of the population said that if they could they would buy top of the range garden furniture to while away the hours.
- **Garden Shed:** While there was a time when the garden shed was traditionally "Dad's refuge", apparently the shed has undergone a makeover, with many people spending thousand of pounds on the structures. However, while one in six people in Britain owns a shed<sup>2</sup>, when it comes to designing their Gardens of Eden, Brits put the good old garden shed way down the wish list, with only 10% of them choosing this option. That said, it is still the domain of the male of the species, with men more keen than women (11% vs. 9%).
- **Greenhouse:** 9% of people dream of a greenhouse for their gardens, with men more enthusiastic than women (11% vs. 7%). Wales is the UK's greenhouse capital (15%).
- **Plants:** While many people are thinking of the more designer additions to their gardens, the research shows that people are turning away from

the traditional look - with only 5% dreaming of adding exotic trees to their garden and a mere 4% a vegetable patch. Only vegetation-starved Londoners buck the trend with a healthy 8% wanting to grow their own.

- **Gnomes:** While garden gnomes are a regular feature of thousands of gardens in the UK, it would appear that they will soon be hanging up their fishing rods and heading for the Job Centre. Only 1% of people say they'd like to add a gnome to their home.

**Charlie Herbert, Marketing Director at Goldfish, comments:** "The good news is that people have exciting and ambitious plans for their gardens, and it's interesting that the humble fountain now appears in a multitude of forms and is the most popular garden addition. Indeed, the Goldfish Garden at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show boasts a water feature at the heart of its Mediterranean design.

"But the top choices in this survey are all fairly expensive and this may be persuading people to put their plans on hold. In these cases, a flexible loan that has no early repayment penalties could give the green-fingered the garden they want now, while allowing them to pay for it as soon as the money becomes available."

## **GUIDE TO REGIONS:**

South East	Essex, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex, Kent
South West	Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire
East Midlands	Northants, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire
West Midlands	Hereford, Worcester, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire
East Anglia	Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire
North West	Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside
North	Cumbria, Durham, Northumberland, Cleveland, Tyne and Wear
Yorkshire	Yorkshire/Humberside

**REGIONAL FINDINGS – If the cost wasn't an issue and you could add one of the following to your garden, which one would it be? (%)**

Region	Water feature /fountain	Spa bath/ Jacuzzi	Pagoda/ summer-house	Garden furniture	Garden shed	Green-house	Flag-stones	Trees/ exotic trees	Fruit/ veg patch	Gnomes
<b>NATIONAL FINDINGS</b>	20	16	14	13	10	9	8	5	4	1
London	19	16	7	16	6	14	3	10	8	1
South East	20	18	16	13	12	5	7	6	1	1
South West	20	8	18	13	8	14	5	4	6	1
Wales	27	13	9	13	12	15	4	3	3	1
East Anglia	15	19	17	10	12	8	1	11	5	1
West Midlands	20	24	16	10	9	7	8	4	1	1
East Midlands	18	17	16	18	9	7	8	3	3	1
North West	20	20	14	13	5	5	13	7	3	*
Yorkshire	21	19	16	12	8	9	8	2	4	1
North	22	9	20	14	13	7	9	3	1	1
Scotland	15	11	12	15	14	11	14	4	5	1

**Ends**

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**Notes to Editors**

RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2003 20-23 May (20-21 RHS Members only)

<sup>1</sup> Mintel 2001

<sup>2</sup> Stu Evans, presenter of new TV show, Shedheads

**Goldfish Personal Loan Rates**

Amount

APR

£5,000 to £20,000

7.7%

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11.9%

**Key Features:**

Flexible Approach

Overpayments allowed  
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Repayment date changed on request  
No penalty for early repayment  
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Minimum term 12 months; maximum 60 months

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