

National Trust Press Release

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Summer sorted with the National Trust's Summer of Play sponsored by Starling Bank

Make the most of the longer days, warmer weather, and quality time together as a family with the National Trust's Summer of Play, sponsored by Starling Bank.

During the summer holidays, experience National Trust places in new and exciting ways, with a family-festival feel and designated areas jam-packed with outdoor games and experiences. Get active and have a go at sports and garden games, with archery, croquet, athletics, ball sports and plenty more to spark your competitive side. Explore and play in nature with wild art, bug-hunting, and pond dipping, enjoy performance play with storytelling and dress-up sessions and get crafty with art workshops and craft making. With a range of activities and events at each National Trust place, there's something to make everyone's summer day out special.

Designed with families in mind, Summer of Play activities will be dotted around National Trust sites, so there'll be plenty of space to enjoy the games and activities as well as picnicking spots, shady rest areas and of course, toilets, cafes and pop-up kiosks offering refreshing food and drink.

Here we've rounded up some of the best and most exciting National Trust events and activities to keep the whole family busy this summer.

Derbyshire & Peak District

Calke Abbey

With peeling paintwork and overgrown courtyards, Calke Abbey, is the perfect place to unleash your imagination this summer. With a full programme of events to keep you entertained all summer long, there's something for everyone to enjoy. Join the characters of Calke and discover a world of adventure and play across the parkland and gardens. The Garden of Imagination returns to the Walled Kitchen Garden, encouraging you to utilize creativity and tap into all your senses. After you've run wild, cool down in the Slip Garden – a quiet space, where you can relax in the shade. Visit the Stableyards for old-fashioned games or venture down to Calke Explore for active adventures. Hire a bike and hit the Tramway Trail or if you're feeling a bit wobbly, have a go at the balance bike course on select days. The natural play area is also open for those looking to burn off extra energy before heading home.

The Children's Country House at Sudbury

Open every day for the summer from 13 July to 3 September, The Children's Country House at Sudbury has a fun filled summer holiday programme. You can follow the grasshopper trail in the garden, explore The Hall of Wonder and The World Below or attempt to not get lost in the grass mazes.

As part of Summer of Play, we will have new and exciting things around the garden to encourage different play styles. This will include games and activities throughout summer like hopscotch and skipping where you can play outdoors with friends and family.

We've extended our den building to inspire the next generation of builders and architects and have tinker trays to expand imaginations.

You can also join us every Wednesday for our Wednesdays of Wonder – each week we will host a selection of different artists and you can work alongside them to create art, dance, music and much more! Every Wednesday between 19 July – 30 August.

All visits to The Children's Country House at Sudbury need to be pre-booked via the website.

Ilam Park and the White Peak

Ilam Park and the countryside of the White Peak are great places for your family and friends to explore, be creative, get active and play in nature this summer. Enjoy a picnic or fuel your adventures with some of the delicious food and drink on offer from the Manifold Tea Room.

With a rich history of inspiring artists, you can find your inspiration with Art in the Park taking place throughout the summer. Look at the views, both big and small and become an artist for the day. Borrow art materials from the Stable yard Second-hand Bookshop and look out for pop up art stations around the gardens.

There's also a host of activities that encourage play and imagination with Playday at Ilam Park on 2 August 10.30am-4pm. Have fun building with our collection of cardboard boxes, have a go at messy play, make a den, try barefoot walking and enjoy an exciting selection of games.

Kedleston Hall

This summer, Kedleston's 800 acres of parkland has plenty on offer with lots of places to play before finding a spot for a memorable picnic. Choose from a range of activities this summer to keep all the family entertained.

Derbyshire Archery club will be offering free 'have a go' sessions for visitors every Wednesday in August. Or maybe take the Summer Scavenger Challenge – a free self-led activity for families available daily from 22 July to 3 September.

There's plenty of inspiration on the 50 things list. Run around in the rain (should the typical British weather catch you off guard!), create some wild art or make a grass trumpet.

Longshaw

Longshaw, Burbage and the Eastern Moors offer visitors and families plenty to do this summer as you discover ancient woods, parkland and the heather moorlands that span the landscape.

Take a break and enjoy the café, winner of several awards for architecture, it is the perfect place to enjoy the view on a clear summer's day.

Activities will be on offer every day across the summer holiday, including bee trails and journey sticks and on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, you can enjoy drop-in activities in the Moorland Discovery Centre.

Test your map reading skills with orienteering activities. Get active and enjoy a day of fun lawn games or take aim with our popular archery sessions. Explore your creative side with one of our natural crafts sessions or make some noise with a host of exciting instruments at one of our music and performance days.

Leicestershire

Stoneywell

Summer holiday fun and nostalgia – Stoneywell’s gardens and woodland provide the perfect place for children to break away from screen time and enjoy a traditional summer holiday adventure. With the feeling of stepping into a Swallows and Amazons book it’s ideal for whiling away a summer day. Simple activities include eating a picnic in the wild, having fun with sticks, creating some wild art, or making friends with a bug. If you’re lucky, you might even spot a lizard or slow worm basking in the sun.

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For images:

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Notes to editors

About the National Trust

The National Trust is a conservation charity founded in 1895 by three people: Octavia Hill, Sir Robert Hunter and Hardwicke Rawnsley, who saw the importance of the nation's heritage and open spaces and wanted to preserve them for everyone to enjoy. Today, across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, we continue to look after places so people and nature can thrive.

The challenges of the coronavirus pandemic have shown this is more important than ever. From finding fresh air and open skies to tracking a bee's flight to a flower; from finding beauty in an exquisite painting or discovering the hidden history of a country house nearby - the places we care for enrich people's lives.

Entirely independent of Government, the National Trust looks after more than 250,000 hectares of countryside, 780 miles of coastline and 500 historic properties, gardens and nature reserves. In 2021/22 we received 20 million visitors. The National Trust is for everyone - we were founded for the benefit of the whole nation, and our 5.7 million members and over 44,000 volunteers support our work to care for nature, beauty, history for everyone, for ever.