



Russell Play

Natural Play

A Guide to introducing
Sustainable Natural Elements
into fixed play areas.



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Russell Play being a company that has recognised
the need to manage its impact on the environment,
is committed to meeting customers' expectations
for an environmentally sound service.

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From concept to reality

Russell Play work with you to create great open spaces, from concept to reality.

Using some of the elements featured in this booklet we have prepared an example of how a natural site may look. Russell Play have an in-house design resource to produce drawings which enable our customers to visualise natural play designs.



Introduction

Introducing Natural elements into fixed play areas.

Within this booklet you will find Russell Play's policy on natural play, design suggestions and a small selection of products chosen to help you create a sustainable yet stimulating and exciting open spaced play area.

We have introduced a range of unique stones and boulders which can be incorporated into a play scheme, various safe species of trees and plants, wooden elements and robust play equipment - all of which encourage children to explore and interact with the natural world and use their imagination to invent new play experiences. Further information and this guidebook can be downloaded from our website at www.russell-play.com

Fair Play Strategy

The Department for Children, Schools and Families' Fair Play consultation strategy emphasises the importance of creating a natural environment for play. Research has provided strong evidence that it can develop children's imaginative and social skills, encourages a greater level of physical activity and allows them to experience and deal with moderate risks.

Natural play and the environment

Russell Play has introduced a range of products to complement our natural play designs. These play elements encourage children to explore and interact with the natural world and use their imagination to invent new play experiences.

Because no two natural elements are alike and the wild spaces vary according to the weather and the season, children can experience a multitude of different play activities and sensations.

Russell Play provide a comprehensive design, drawing and consultation package to enable our customers to visualise natural play designs to the fullest extent.

The products featured can complement any landscape design, allowing children to develop while discovering, exploring and interacting with the natural world. These features can be used to enhance our existing play designs, or used to create an open, landscaped natural play environment.

Natural Elements

Designed to enhance fixed play areas

Visit our website
for more information
www.russell-play.com

Russell Play's Policy on Natural Play

Working with you to create a natural and stimulating play space.

- All sites designed and constructed to EN 1176 and EN 1177 standards.
- Post installation inspections by trained in-house RPII inspectors.
- Careful selection of materials and natural elements to ensure safe, sustainable and great play value sites.
- Over 30 years' experience designing play areas, with professional in-house expertise to manage entire project from concept to completion.
- Large range of unique natural play products with standards compliance.
- Bespoke products which can be designed for any specific site e.g. rope items can be specially adapted to fit an existing feature or product.
- Design knowledge to enhance landscape architects' design and consultation process.
- Sites designed and constructed to be DDA compliant and accredited by leading DDA advisory organization.
- Full construction capability, assisted by special partnership with leading specialist contractor, to ensure completion of multiple sites on time.
- Specialist dedicated Contract Managers to oversee and manage every installation in the UK.
- Proven track record in managing large multiple site construction programmes.

Our guidelines for natural play.

- Prepare an audit and site survey to achieve the maximum potential from the existing landscape.
- Ensure that both the area and selected play equipment are sustainable and can be maintained correctly.
- Incorporate existing natural features such as slopes and mounds into the overall design. Consider whether natural vegetation can be left in place and whether this could be enhanced with further planting.
- Introduce tactile elements such as boulders, wood, sand or water for children to experiment with.
- Ensure accessibility for disabled and able-bodied children.
- Design in as many opportunities as possible for children to experience risk and challenge while keeping safety in mind.

Landscaping

Working with the existing terrain or introducing a new design.

Successful creative landscaping is the key to developing a natural play environment. The challenge is to create a safe balance between the provision of fixed play equipment and natural elements where children can be challenged, stimulated and able to experience risk. Good creative play spaces should encourage a sense of adventure and allow children to engage with their natural surroundings. Russell Play can design and supply these play spaces with a balance of natural elements and fixed play equipment.

Surfacing

Russell Play use various types of loose fill and fixed surfacing ranging from sand, bark, safagrass, wetpour, safety tiles and grass. Most play units can be modified to suit raised or sunken pits, all play units conform to EN1176 and are compatible for installation with any safety surfaces.

Grass surfaces can be used as safety surfacing up to a fall height of 1000mm in accordance to EN1176. Safety surfacing should be used in areas exceeding this fall height requirement.

Mounding

Intelligent mounding for that creative edge.

The simple addition of a grass or wetpour mound can provide an important element in the design of a successful play area. Giving the feeling of a landscaped environment increases the sense of fun and adventure. All children love to climb, roll or run up and down mounds. Using any existing natural slopes, ditches, hollows or mounds can greatly enhance the play value of an open space.

Mounding can also be combined with hard landscaping items such as rope bridges running between two mounds or slides built onto a mound or slope. Coloured wetpour graphics and designs can be added to create themed environments.

Boulders can be positioned creatively to help increase ease of access up and down mounds, encourage climbing and provide alternative routes. Low level Terranos climbing nets are designed in such a way they can be used across various levels of terrain and steep mounds. Using Terranos climbers on newly established grass mounds encourage growth and help prevent the grass surface to become worn.



Stone Elements

Providing unique ingredients for designing your play area.

Stone products are an ideal addition to a play environment and they can provide stunning impact when included in a creative playground design. The pieces can promote increased imaginary play and encourage active free play such as hide and seek. Combined with creative design and open space, children and young people can exercise imagination, experience risk and undertake challenges.

Stones can be supplied in installed heights of between 0.5 metres and 4 metres. Stone types available are Preseli Blue, Sarsen Stone, Cornish Glacial Granite, Slate River Limestone, Sandstone and Irish Quartzite. The stones and boulders can also be supplied with engravings or carved symbols to increase sensory development. Stones can be supplied with holes of a minimum diameter of 400mm.

Pieces can be introduced to a play area to complement and enhance natural spaces. All pieces are priced on application.

Recumbent Boulders

TC1003 - Small groups of recumbent boulders creatively positioned throughout a landscaped area can offer seating alternatives or hopping platforms.

Height 500mm



Recumbent Carved Boulders

TC1005 - All pieces are available with carved symbols which increase sensory development. Designs can range from a number of styles of Pictish art or illustrations relevant to the local history.

Height 500mm



Tall Holed Stones

TC-SS-HS-008 - Tall holed stones display some of the most impressive results within a landscaped area. The natural Cornish Granite which can be supplied with moss and carvings allow multiple touching sensations.

Height 2400mm



Wide Holed Stones

TC-SS-HS-005 - Wide pieces can give smaller areas greater visual impact. Using smooth yet robust Cornish Granite creates a clean and dominating impression within any open space.

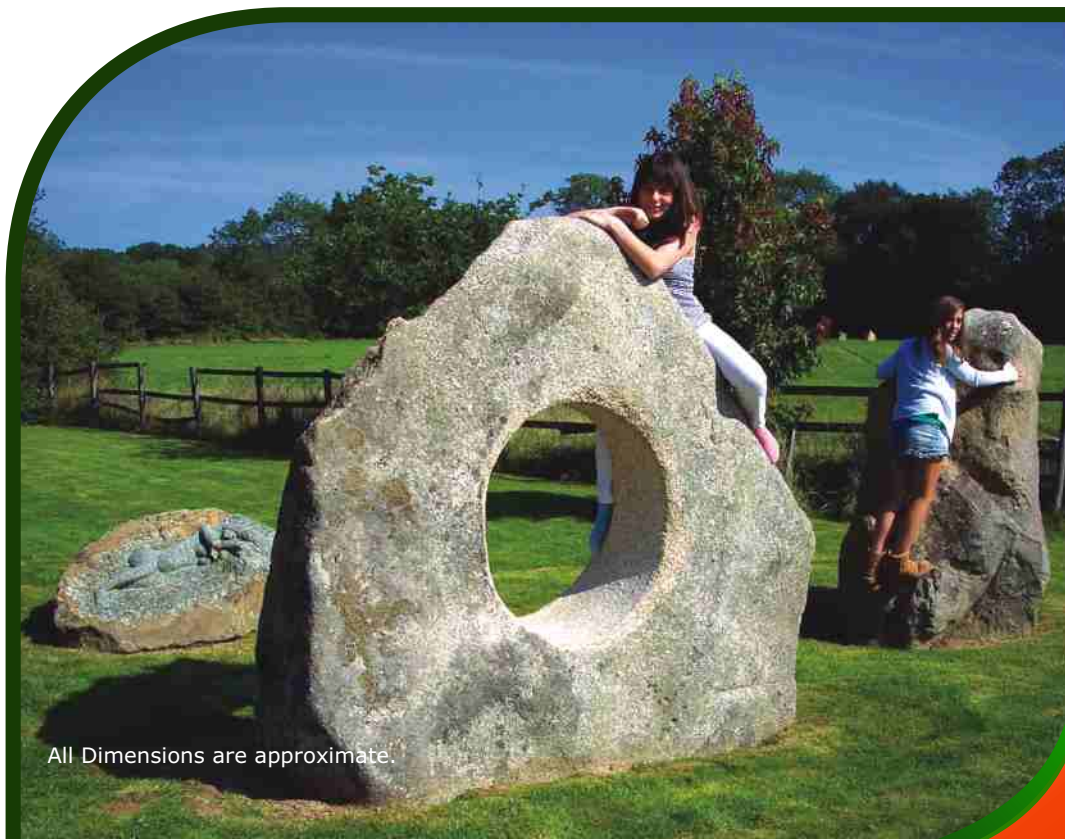
Height 1800mm



Small Standing Stones

TC-SS-001 - Smaller standing stones can provide an alternative entrance feature to an open space. These pieces are also popular as ornamental features in bedded planting areas. Carvings can transform these into attractive commemorative plaques.

Height 1500mm



All Dimensions are approximate.

Foliage

Safe vegetation to enhance your design.

Mixing the types of vegetation within and around an open space can greatly help the feel of a natural area, especially in built up locations. Utilizing dense bushes and shrubs instead of fences will create a sectioned area while keeping the impression of free space. Using Trees which create interaction all year such as hiding places should also be taken into account, evergreens and fern bushes for a sense of warmth and Oak Trees for a sense of adventure and depth.

Areas of long grass (*Stipa tenuifolia* - Pheasant Grass) planted alongside short grass creates interesting walkways and secret passageways when trimmed creatively. All should create movement in the wind, seasonal colour changes, smells and touching sensations.

Using various species of plantation intelligently will create stunning adventure spaces while introducing an element of risk. Grass or hedge mazes carefully positioned are excellent additions.

Which Shrubs and Bushes should you use?

A small selection of various Shrubs and Bushes which are safe to use.

Lavandula Spica Angustifolia

English Lavender - Is popular for its colourful flowers and sweet scented fragrance. The plant has a strong ability to survive in damp and well drained soil conditions.

Mature Height 480mm



Forsythia Intermedia

Forsythia - are popular early spring flowering shrubs in gardens and parks. They are both spring flowering shrubs, with yellow flowers and are grown and prized for being tough and reliable.

Mature Height 960mm



Lonicera x Xylosteoides 'Clavey's Dwarf'

Honeysuckle - is a dense compact shrub ideal for hedging. Small yellow flowers are produced followed by dark red berries.

Mature Height 960mm



All Dimensions are approximate.

Cotinus Obovatus 'Grace'

Smokebush - are rounded shrubs or small trees and are popular for their Summer interest and Autumn colour. Summer boasts a smoky haze of soft open pinkish purple flowers plumes. September and October offer a change of leaf colour to a brilliant orange-red. This is a great all year plant.

Mature Height 1800mm



Fatsia Japonica

Japanese Aralia - This tough evergreen with shiny, leathery leaves like vast outstretched hands is perfect for any adventure areas. Happiest in heavy soil and can cope with little or no direct sunlight.

Mature Height 960mm



Cornus Sericea 'Stolonifera'

Dogwood Shrub - produces four-petaled flowers in early spring and stunning bright yellow stems all year round which help add colour during the winter months. This is a great all round bush which helps to body scarce areas.

Mature Height 720mm



Rosmarinus Officinalis 'Gorizia'

Gorizia Rosemary - produces a lingering scent which attracts bees and butterflies. The leaves and flowers are double the size of other species of rosemaries which has a greater impact or large outdoor areas.

Mature Height 720mm



Cornus Sanguinea 'Midwinter Fire'

Bloodtwig Dogwood - has mid-green leaves and produces small, creamy-white flowers in May and June. This will visually enhance an area with the brilliant, flame-coloured stems that are revealed when the leaves, which turn orange-yellow in autumn, fall.

Mature Height 720mm



Which Trees should you use?

A small selection of various species of Trees which are safe to use.

Trees

Abies Fraseri

Fraser Fir - is strongly scented with a sweet turpentine like smell, more so during damp mornings and evenings. This is a very popular species especially for occupying large open areas.

Mature Height 4800mm to 6000mm



Eucalyptus Niphophila

Snow Gum - is a well known and lovely Eucalyptus with attractive grey, green and cream patchwork bark. This species bears small, white flowers in summer. This is a Fantastic adventurous tree for open spaces which offers bushy spreading.

Mature Height 8000mm to 15,000mm



Betula Utilis var. Jacquemontii

Kashmir Birch - boasts its intensely white silvery bark. Plant several close together to make a small clump stands out against a foil of dark green woodland or evergreen hedging. In autumn the foliage is vivid yellow.

Mature Height 4800mm to 6500mm



Fraxinus Pennsylvanica

Green Ash, Red Ash - produces smooth and gray bark on young trees, becoming thick and fissured with age. The winter buds are reddish-brown, with a smooth velvety texture which encourage a wealth of touch sensations.

Mature Height 5000mm to 12,000mm



Acer Palmatum 'Rhode Island Red'

Japanese Maple - is great for Larger foundation planting. This species offers grand hand like leaves in a stunning ruby red colour. Fantastic tree for contrasting landscape designs.

Mature Height 5000mm to 9000mm



Paulownia Tomentosa

Empress Tree - produces stunning pink, light purple flowers which are produced before the leaves in early spring. This species can be a stunning addition to any play area offering vivid colour contrast in spring and pure green throughout the summer.

Mature Height 9000mm to 16,000mm



Tilia Tomentosa

Silver Lime - flowers in spring with a pale yellow bloom and has a strong scent which attracts and is pollinated by honeybees. This species is widely grown as an ornamental tree throughout Europe, great addition to a natural area.

Mature Height 6000 to 9000mm



Fraxinus Americana 'Autumn Purple'

White Ash - is fast growing throughout its life cycle. This species produces dark green leaves which turn reddish-purple in the autumn. A spectacular tree for autumn colour.

Mature Height 4000mm to 18,000mm



Fixed Play Products

Providing robust dynamic play structures to complete your design.

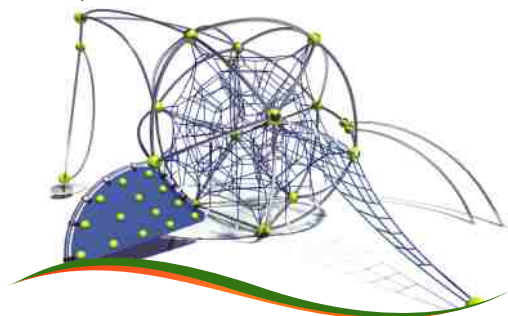
Russell Play supply a wide range of Play and Sport structures designed specifically for outdoor use. Russell Play products are Hot Dip Galvanized and offer a 20 year anti corrosion guarantee. These products are manufactured with Anti-Graffiti Technology, a specially developed powder coat formula which helps prevent unwanted graffiti to permanently adhere.

In this section we have listed a small selection of innovative and exciting play products which can be used to complete any Natural Play area. For a comprehensive listing on all our products, our design and manufacturing process, technical information and downloads please visit our website.

Cosmo

Berliner Cosmo - units are some of the most popular rope structures in the play market. Using modern colour combinations, steel cored rope and stainless steel poles, these units are iconic feature units.

Maximum Height 3800mm



Metro Rotation

Russell Play - provide a wide range of smaller products which support the larger units. Metro Rotation are supplied with a 20 year Anti Corrosion Guarantee and an Anti-Graffiti Powder Coat surface.

Various Heights.



UDB

Urban Design Berlin - have added to their range with some stunning pieces. These units offer a unique characteristic and architectural approach to play equipment and would be an asset to any play space.

Various Heights.



Timber Play

Spielart products are bursting with a wealth of play value and adventure. Being stylish and intelligent in play design and using a friendly approach to the various design concepts throughout the ranges encourages imagination through play.

Various Heights.



Wooden Elements

Creating structures unique to your play space.

Wooden products are one of the strongest elements of a natural play area. They can be produced to almost any specification using a variety of hard and soft wood. Once they are made and installed, these wooden elements create an impression of an open and rural environment, even on the smallest of sites and are ideal for providing natural seating, sleeper climbing walls and meeting places.

A wide range of wood varieties are available, namely soft woods such as Poplar, Pine, Sitka Spruce and Bruce and hard woods such as Oak, Ash, Beech and Cherry. Additional varieties can be sourced on request. All items are individually priced on application.

Unique Structures

Creating unique sculptures produced from dead or dying trees or existing tree stumps can achieve an overwhelming impact within an open space.

Schools and Community Groups can also benefit from these carvings as children can watch and participate in the design and carving process on site. This helps encourage children to take part in the overall concept and design of the play area.

Sculptures can be designed around sketches supplied from school children to landscape architects and based on almost any theme. The structures can be created in various heights, shapes and sizes. From small trim-trail like caterpillars to commanding masterpieces such as the eagle to the left.

For further information on any of the products and ideas featured in this booklet please contact a member of our sales team or our offices in Edinburgh and Poole.



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Visit our website
for more information
www.russell-play.com



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For more information on any of the elements featured in this booklet please contact Russell Play. This booklet can also be downloaded from www.russell-play.com. Fully illustrated catalogues are available on request or visit our website for further details.



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