



Let's talk about sex...

- One in ten Brits log on for casual sex -

Casual sex is beginning to shed its social stigma, with one in ten British adults aged between 25 – 40 admitting they've gone online for casual sex, new research out today reveals.

The research, carried out by Gumtree.com, reveals that 10% of Brits have used the net to find a casual relationship, and 39% of those polled say they find it more acceptable today than ever before to log on to find casual sex partners.

4pm* is the time of day when most people log on to Gumtree.com to find a no-strings attached partner, with Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow and London the busiest cities for 'sex surfing'.

The site has seen a 39% increase of casual relationship ads in the past 6 months alone, and postings in the 'girls seeking guys' section is up by 119%, proving that more females are actively looking to find casual partners online.

Unsurprisingly perhaps, of the 1, 356 adults polled more men than women are tempted by the thrill of casual sex, with 14% of men admitting to having gone online to forge a casual relationship, compared with 8% of women.

The research also revealed the various reasons why people are logging on for casual sex:

- A significant majority say it's because they can be more open and honest (32%) and sexually confident (23%) online than they can be in the real world.
- 17% claim to be too busy to pursue a relationship offline, but still want to have sex.
- Discretion and secret casual liaisons with those other than their spouse are key for those who are married (8%)
- For 12% of sex surfers, the internet allows them to enjoy more 'exciting' sex, and one in ten (9%) are going online to have their secret fantasies fulfilled.

Sophy Silver of Gumtree.com comments on this new social trend:

"This research provides a fascinating insight into the impact of the internet on modern dating and socialising and moreover, British attitudes to casual sex. "The internet allows people to get to know their partner better before agreeing to meet up, and gives them the opportunity to reject unwanted offers in the safety of their home."

Anonymity is the biggest benefit seen by one in two (55%) of those who use the internet for casual sex. Online relationships are much less 'intimidating' than traditional dating for 42% of casual seekers. Speed is key for 41% of adults who find it quicker to go online than go to a bar or club to find a willing partner.

Of those who do use the internet to find a casual relationship, 5% of Brits took less than 24 hours for someone to respond to their ad, and one in twelve find a partner within a few days.

Sex expert and author of 'Brief Encounters: The Women's Guide to

Casual Sex' Emily Dubberley, commented on Gumtree.com's findings:

"There's much less stigma attached to online dating than there used to be, and rightly so - it's nothing to be ashamed of. Casual relationships are becoming increasingly common and the internet offers instant intimacy: you can feel like you've got to know someone a lot more quickly because the anonymous nature of initial communication can make people feel more comfortable about being themselves."

Sophy Silver advises all people looking for casual sex online to be vigilant:

"At Gumtree.com our users' safety is foremost in our minds. We recommend that when surfing for casual sex, people stay safe by not divulging personal information, and always telling a friend when they are meeting up with a fellow surfer. Users should always end a meeting if they feel uncomfortable, and we strongly advise people to use common sense and express due caution in all situations."

- Ends -

For more information or case studies please contact the Gumtree press office at Lexis Public Relations on 020 7908 6589 or email gumtree@lexispr.com

Notes to editor:

- source: Gumtree.com site figures
- Research carried out by TickBox, surveying 1,356 adults aged 25-40 across the UK in September 2007
- On average, there are currently over 5,000 casual sex ads posted on Gumtree.com each week. Postings are highest in London (17%) and the Midlands (13%).

About Gumtree.com

- Gumtree.com was created in London in March 2000 and now covers 60 cities across 6 countries - the UK, and US Ireland, Poland, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa

Some Fast Facts

- 20,000 new ads in a day
- 100,000 new ads in a week
- Half a million new ads in a month
- Three quarters of a million ads live on the site at any one time
- 150 million page impressions every month
- Around 3 million visitors a month
- Gumtree.com users spend 5,360,000 minutes on the website each month