

British Naturism

Media Information Pack

Naturists are a friendly bunch and you will find that lots more information than we can include here can be obtained by speaking to people, so don't hesitate to contact us. Many clubs and other groups will happily invite you to see naturism in action for yourself – there really is no substitute for trying it yourself - and we can provide people and locations if you let us know what you are looking for. The BN Media Group numbers around 100 people who are willing to take part in media work and are all on email, ensuring a quick response. Please also make sure that you check out the rest of our site. We look forward to helping you.

About Naturism

Naturism is the practice of going without clothes, often in a social setting, although there are many definitions of it as there are naturists. The majority of naturists simply enjoy relaxing in the sun and getting an all-over tan. Naturism is a normal, healthy, fun, wholesome, family activity, which promotes a real sense of well-being and is a terrific antidote to the stresses of daily life. Many people who discover it in later life wish they had done so much earlier. Children love it and grow up without many of the usual hang-ups about the human body. There are no restrictions on creed, colour, shape, age, gender, occupation, sexual orientation, disability or marital status – in fact, one of the best things about our community is the wide range of people involved. Sporting activities are so much better without the restrictions that clothes bring. Swimming, mini-ten (our version of tennis that can be played to high standards by people of any age) and boules are amongst the most popular.

See our "What is Naturism?" leaflet:

http://www.british-naturism.org.uk/mediacentre/cat.asp?cat_id=10

Naturism is becoming more and more popular and even those who would never shed their clothes are more understanding and accepting of naturism and it is increasingly portrayed in the media as a mainstream lifestyle and holiday choice.

There is nothing inherently wrong with nudity. Being nude with others brings no embarrassment and first-timers often say how quickly they felt comfortable wearing nothing and seeing others unclothed – in fact, it's easy to forget that everyone is naked. Incidentally, we soon get dressed when the weather turns! Most evening social events at naturist clubs are clothed events.

About British Naturism

British Naturism is the UK's internationally recognised organisation for naturism and exists to unite and support naturists, to protect naturist places and provide more, make social nudity more acceptable across the UK and to provide comprehensive information on naturism and naturists around the world.

British Naturism came into being in 1964 when two societies – The British Sunbathing Society and the British Federation of Sun Clubs merged. We are the UK's only member of the

International Nativist Federation (INF), which exists for similar reasons to us, but acting and operating globally.

We have approximately 12,000 individual members and around 130 sun clubs and swim groups who all support the aims of the organisation through their subscriptions and receive certain other benefits in return. There are many beaches used by naturists in the UK. Our group for 18-30 year olds - YBN (Young British Naturists) - has a full calendar of events both here and abroad.

British Nativism is a volunteer organisation which means that any members (subject only to a minimum period of membership) can stand for election to the Executive Council, the equivalent of our board of directors. We operate with reference to our constitution, which can be modified and updated at our AGM, at which all members may attend and vote.

BN works hard to raise the public profile of naturism, through media work and by lobbying local and national government.

Our main messages

- Naturism is for everyone, irrespective of creed, colour, shape, age, gender, occupation, sexual orientation, disability or marital status
- Naturism is all around – thousands of UK people enjoy naturist holidays and/or skinny dipping on holiday abroad and here in the UK there are sun clubs, swims, beaches and resorts.
- We are not ashamed to stand up and say we are naturists – it is not perverted, disgusting or ludicrous
- The UK's unpredictable climate is not an issue – we have plenty of good days. If you think it is too cold to undress, so do we.
- Children take particularly quickly to naturism and the majority of naturists in the UK enjoy their naturist pursuits as a family. Naturist children grow up without the usual hang-ups about the human body.
- YBN (Young British Naturists) has a membership of 250 young men and women between the ages of 18 and 30 who get together at clubs and beaches most weekends.
- Naturism has nothing to do with sex. Of course naturists are ordinary people and may be attracted to each other, but there is a time and place for everything and sexual activity in a public place is not appropriate.
- The Victorian culture that still pervades in the UK leads most people to grow up believing that “nude is rude” and that being naked with others must mean sex. Naturists are more mature than the majority and realise that we all have a naked body, whatever it looks like. Seeing other naked people brings an understanding that we are all different, and therefore the same underneath. The person, not the body, becomes the focus. Many people find that their long-term body image issues are resolved in naturism.

- We appreciate that not everyone will want to become a naturist or to join our organisation, but we ask for understanding and tolerance for those that do
- Naturism is a healthy pursuit – the action of the sun on the skin promotes the production of vitamin D naturally in the body, sunlight leads to healthy bones and teeth, and is known to improve some skin conditions such as psoriasis
- We want to show businesses that they can benefit by working with and not against us. For example, a huge number of leisure companies and local authorities are making money from naturist groups who hire leisure centres and municipal swimming pools on weekend evenings when they would normally be closed. The naturists that visit naturist beaches are spending money in the surrounding areas. More officially designated beaches means more money for local economies – the “buff” pound.
- It is not a crime simply to be naked in public, despite what many people think. This misunderstanding causes us problems.

Summary of National Opinion Poll (NOP) commissioned by BN in 2000

Poll shows huge support for nude beaches

The use of beaches for nude swimming and sunbathing has the overwhelming support of the British public - a quarter of whom have actually swam without a costume themselves. The poll was commissioned by British Naturism, the UK's national organisation for naturists, which welcomed the findings.

In the first national survey of attitudes to naturism, NOP Omnibus found 82 per cent of the GB population felt it was right to make nudity legal on some beaches.

The poll showed an even higher figure, 88 per cent, agreeing that naturists are harmless while 40 per cent actually described them as sensible. And a quarter of Britons have actually had the courage of their convictions to give it a go themselves, with 24 per cent revealing they had swum in the nude, with over a tenth (14 per cent) saying they'd sunbathed nude to get an all-over tan. Only a tiny minority (7 per cent) said they thought naturism was disgusting, while even fewer said it should be illegal (2 per cent). And only 1 per cent of the public said they would call the police because they would be frightened or distressed to come across a group of nude people.

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