

# Statistics

## A British Naturism Briefing Paper - Malcolm Boura - Updated May 2007.

It is extremely difficult to determine how many naturists there are without a high quality survey. When naturists get dressed the disguise is perfect and naturists do sometimes encounter appalling prejudice so most are very careful whom they let know. Naturism is much more popular and much more generally acceptable than many people believe.

At least 1.2 million people describe themselves as being a naturist which is roughly the same as the membership of the Church of England but it could be double that number. About 1 person in 4 has swum nude and nearly as many have sunbathed nude. One in five has seen a neighbour nude and a similar number have themselves been nude in their garden. Two thirds said that garden nudity should be legal.

Naturists are considered sensible by nearly half of the general public and a massive 9 out of 10 said that they are harmless. Conversely only 7% thought that naturists were disgusting, a tiny 2% thought that they were criminal and

only half of those, 1%, thought that it was criminal enough to be worth informing the police.

Children in the household had no discernible effect on peoples attitudes with respect to beach naturism but it did make a small difference for public swimming pools 57/64% and back gardens 64/69%. It is clear that the concerns of some people about families and children are unfounded.

None of the polls and surveys have been repeated so some caution is needed when identifying trends but nudity and naturism do seem to be becoming more common and more accepted.

### NOP Poll

A 2001 poll by one of the major polling organisations. Sample size 1823 and demographically representative so it is accurate.

Experience of unclothed activities %	
Have you ever:	
a) sunbathed without a costume to get an all-over tan?	14
b) swum without a costume?	24
c) been on a foreign naturist beach?	11
d) visited a British clothes optional beach, resort or Club?	7

Attitudes to encountering nudity %	
If you were walking along the coast on a hot day, and you came across a group of naked people sunbathing, swimming or playing cricket, would you:	
a) ignore them and keep walking?	78
b) be alarmed and keep well away from them?	2
c) go naked yourself?	2
d) settle down but keep your swimming costume on?	13
e) call the police because you were frightened or distressed?	1

Attitudes to naturists %	
Naturists enjoy activities such as sunbathing and swimming without clothes. Do you think such people are:	
a) criminal?	2
b) disgusting?	7
c) harmless?	88
d) sensible?	40

Attitudes to public nudity and the law %	
If it is not intended to give offence, do you think adult nudity should be legal:	
a) in back gardens?	66
b) in quiet areas of public parks?	10
d) at certain times in public swimming pools?	35
e) anywhere that is specifically declared a "clothing optional" zone?	69

and would you describe yourself as a naturist of not? %			
Yes	2	Refused	1
No	97	Don't know	1

### Property Finder Poll

A 2006 online poll. A useful addition

to our knowledge of public behaviour and attitudes.

84% would buy a home next door to naturists:

- No concerns at all 50%
- Ok if not seen 34%
- Not want to buy 16%

Many people are relaxed about nudity

- Been nude outside at home: 20%
- Seen a neighbour nude: 21%

Younger people are more likely to be free from concerns:

Under 45 59%, over 45 41%  
16% would not want naturists next door but people hate:

- Night time party noise 46%
- Music through walls or floors 45%
- Domestic arguments 39%
- Music in garden or balcony 37%

### Local authority

Beach visitors, Wirral. Invited to state their dislikes. Dogs 27.1%, litter 14.5%, naturist beach 6.8% and car park 6.3%. Note close agreement with NOP "disgusting" figure.

### Other polls

There have been numerous other, although less reliable polls. The agreement between them is really quite remarkable.

### Beach use

In 2001 the National Trust told us that on a good day the naturist beach at Studland has about 2½ thousand users.