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**WOMEN IN THE SHIRES SWAP THE W.I. FOR WI-FI  
AS THEY LOOK FOR YOUNGER LOVERS**

- **280,000 older women in Britain want to date a younger man**
- **42% of men in their 40's and 50's are looking for a younger woman**

According to new research from scientifically-based online dating service PARSHIP.co.uk, the last 12 months have seen a 20% growth in the number of older women looking to meet a much younger man. Now, 280,000 British women over 45 are looking for a toyboy and 3% of this group want a man who's at least ten years younger than they are. But it's not the sophisticated urban species – easily identified by its celebrity styling, sports cars, designer bags and botox – that's growing in numbers; it's their more rural cousins. It's time to welcome the County Kitties, who now outnumber Urban Cougars by more than 32%.

With internet dating having moved from marginal to mainstream, and 3.9 million Britons visiting dating sites each month, these rural women are swapping the W.I. for Wi-Fi in their search younger love. With their numbers now reaching 160,000, these newly divorced, well-heeled women, with their promise of home cooking, invigorating walks and low-pressure lifestyle, are proving irresistible to the younger man: five percent of single males between the ages of 25 and 35 openly admitted they were actively looking to meet an attractive older woman, with 47% saying age wasn't an issue.

Dr Victoria Lukats, psychiatrist and PARSHIP's relationship and dating expert, explains the lure of the older rural woman to the younger man:

“Sophisticated city women may be able to attract a younger man with the lure of expensive restaurants, five star holidays and designer gifts, but it's really not that surprising that younger men are also attracted to more domestically-focused women. A lovingly prepared home-cooked meal is as much of an aphrodisiac as dining out at a fancy restaurant. The brain is stimulated to release pleasure-inducing endorphins by a good home-cooked meal in a sympathetic environment. Even the smell of food as it's cooking can trigger endorphins that make us think of love.”

Although the number of women looking to meet a younger mate is on the rise, there's still a long way to go if they are to catch up with their male counterparts. When it comes to men in their 40's and 50's, 42% are looking for a younger woman – 18% for one five years their junior and 24% for a woman ten years younger. Fortunately for them, over a third (36%) of women between the ages of 25 and 35 would prefer their partner to be older by five years or more.

According to Dr Victoria Lukats, these figures are not surprising:

“Younger women have always been attracted to men who are slightly older than they are. This can be traced back to prehistoric man when the woman would choose a partner able to provide the best chances of survival for her and her offspring. Modern woman isn't really that different: she wants a partner who can give her security both, financial and emotional, and a slightly older man is likely to be more financially established than his younger counterpart who is just starting off.

“Older women however, don't need to concern themselves with such life-changing decisions. They've raised their children who have probably flown the nest together with their husband. Their only concern is their pleasure – and not whether their new boyfriend will pay the gas bill.”

Women who live in the Home Counties, Wiltshire and Dorset are twice more likely to date a man five to ten years younger than they are, where as women from Glasgow and Yorkshire are the least likely.

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