

# LOOSE LIPPED LONDONERS WIN GOLD FOR GOSSIP

Submitted by: Nelson Bostock Unlimited

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- London is nation's 'chattiest' region, according to Post Office® research
- UK men last 'less than 2 minutes' – on the phone!
- Post Office® backs the London 2012 bid with launch of exclusive International Phone Card
- Survey finds 4 in 5 Londoners would be proud to host Games

London, February 15th 2005 - A new survey by Post Office® Phonecards has confirmed the North / South divide is alive and well – at least when it comes to the way we use the phone. However, anyone expecting the stereotypes of neighbourly Northerners and surly Southerners to be confirmed is in for a shock – London is the nation's chattiest city!

The research also had some more good news for London as it competes for the right to host the world's biggest sporting event in 2012 – over 80% of Londoners say they would be proud for their home city to host the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games.

The findings come from research carried out by the Post Office® as part of its support for London's bid to host the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, also marked by today's launch of a unique range of Post Office® 'Back the Bid' International Phonecards. The survey found that people in the nation's capital are the real Paula Radcliffe-style endurance callers of the country, with 45% spending an average of over 10 minutes talking every time they pick up the phone.

By comparison, only 34% of people in the North say they stay on the line for more than ten minutes – and phone bills in the North East must be amongst the smallest in the country, with only 18% regularly spending more than 10 minutes on a call. Indeed, it seems North Easterners are Darren Campbell-style sprinters who hate picking up the receiver - a whopping 58% admit they only make calls for practical purposes and look to keep their calls as short as possible.

The Post Office® commissioned ICM Research to conduct a nationwide investigation into the country's calling habits – and discovered that Britain's callers have a lot in common with its Olympic athletes:

- Almost half the country (48%) are telephone 'sprinters', who aim to keep their conversations as short as possible and prefer to have a practical reason for making a call
- Almost a fifth (19%) are 'marathon runners' – they look forward to long, drawn out chats and will happily spend long periods of time on the phone
- 14% are 'triathletes', excelling at carrying out several different other tasks while on the telephone
- 10% are 'relay runners', and usually pass the handset between each member of the family or household when having a chinwag

While the myth that Londoners are unsociable may have been overturned, gender stereotypes were still very much in evidence. The research confirmed what millions of women up and down the country already knew – men make phone calls like Darren Campbell, sprinting to hang up as soon as they've picked up.

In comparison, over a quarter of the nation's women have more in common with Britain's world record holding marathon runner Paula Radcliffe when they pick up the phone. They're typically in it for the long haul, enjoying idling away long periods of time chatting with family and friends – for 51%, that means every call they make is more than 10 minutes long.

As far as the nation's males are concerned, however, all comparisons to Darren Campbell end with the lightening speed of their phone calls. The research shows that even when they are on the phone, over half of all men are likely to be slumped on the sofa, glued to the television at the same time – and around a quarter admit to surfing the internet while receiving a call. Whilst women are just as likely to multitask on the phone (61% say they do), they're likely to be concentrating on the call and also performing active household chores like tidying or cooking.

The Post Office® 'Back the Bid' International phonecards are available from today and allow consumers to show their support for London's bid to host the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. The cards offer the Post Office's® cheapest ever international call rates to most countries around the world, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week - with no connection fee and calls charged by the second.

"The Olympic Games are a special event that brings people from all over the world together, so we thought it was appropriate to use our phonecards - which allow friends and families in different countries and on different continents to stay in touch easily and cheaply – to show our support for London's bid to host the 2012 games," said Nicky Hall, Communications Category Manager, at Post Office Ltd. "With our new phone cards you get crystal clear call quality, a dedicated customer service team and, best of all, low rates everyday – so you don't have to worry if your relatives are 'marathon runners' who like nothing more than a long winded chat!"

- ENDS -

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Notes to editors:

Research was carried out by ICM in January 2005. 1000 people, aged 28-65+ yrs, were interviewed nationwide. Supporting images and Post Office® and London 2012 'Back the Bid' logos available upon request.

For additional information or to receive a breakdown of statistics from the ICM Post Office® research, please contact Claire Smith at Nelson Bostock on 020 7229 4400 or email [claire.smith@nelsonbostock.com](mailto:claire.smith@nelsonbostock.com)

About The Post Office® 'Back the Bid' phone cards:

The limited edition Post Office® 'Back the Bid' phonecards are available from any Post Office® in the UK in £5 and £10 values. The Post Office® 'Back the Bid' phonecards have no connection fee, offer low rates to most countries around the world with no hidden charges and have simple, per second billing.

Tariffs:

Destination

USA Pence per Minute

3.5 Destination

Russia Pence Per Minute

From 3.75

UK Local and National 3.5 India 12.5

Australia 3.5 Pakistan 16.66

New Zealand 4.16 Bangladesh 12.5

South Africa 5.83 Zimbabwe 3.5

France 3.5 Nigeria From 6

Germany 3.5 Ghana 9.64

Spain 3.5 Mauritius 12.5

Ireland 3.5 Malaysia 3.5

Poland 3.5 Indonesia 3.5

Full international rates can be found at [www.postoffice.co.uk](http://www.postoffice.co.uk) or call 0845 609 1193

More about the Post Office®

With around 15,500 branches across the country, the Post Office® is the UK's biggest retail chain, and is larger than all of the UK's banks and building societies put together. Around 93 per cent of the UK population lives within a mile of a Post Office® branch.

In conjunction with its partners, the Post Office® offers almost 200 products and services, including phonecards and mobile phone top-ups, travel and financial services (including personal loans, car and home insurance), banking, bill payments, lottery products, licence applications and postal services. It is the largest supplier of foreign currency in the UK, with 25 per cent market share, and a leading

provider of travel insurance.

The Post Office® is also the biggest cash handler in the country – with more than £140 billion passing through its hands each year. 27p in every £1 in circulation goes through a Post Office branch, and more than 500 million household bills are paid at Post Office® branches each year – with a value of £12 billion.

The Post Office®, or the GPO as it used to be known, was also responsible for all the nation's telecommunications – from 1912, when a national service was first introduced, right through until 1981 when BT was created to operate as a separate commercial business.

In 2003, the Post Office Ltd turnover was £1,186 million. Post Office Ltd is a separate limited company under the Royal Mail Group