

>> Get a life

What's wrong with our priorities that we put work before romance? "Time-starved" single professionals have enabled a Gateshead matchmaking agency, after one year as a start-up, to achieve a first-year turnover double its prediction.

Founder Sharon Kell and her small team of Cupids saw a massive 300% rise in applicants seeking a partner in one month alone.

She started Coco Moon after heading Orange's UK customer retentions department for 12 years.

She says: "Many of our customers are highly successful entrepreneurs or senior decision-makers who say there are limited options for them in finding a like-minded life partner.

"After all," she sympathises, "it's not something you can delegate to your PA."