

ANOTHER fashion boomerang is taking centre by storm. Over-the-hill socks are making a big comeback, with Paaches, Omid and Alex Charon among fans. It's a tricky look to get right, so if you want to follow in their footsteps, wear black opaques and don't flash 'em much, flush.

anila bag



FIRST there was Worcester Woman and now there is Asda Woman. What do they have in common? They are the women Tony Blair wants to woo. But while Worcester is old hat, the PM now wants to court the kind of woman who sits behind a till, stocks shelves and basically does it all. They might as well be Wonder Woman, but while Lynda Carter span around in a red and blue leotard and booted bodices, the only spinning Asda woman gets to do is the washing, not to mention the rest of the household, before rushing out to work her fingers to the bone for low pay. Yep, this is the lot of Asda women. So-called because the supermarket does a great deal for women, which is fair enough. She is also the latest in a line of characters invented by political figures to show their target voters. We have had Margaret Thatcher's Essex Man, John Major's Bizarre Man, Tony Blair's Mordred Man and Gordon Brown's aforementioned Worcester Woman, among others. There was even Florida Family and they could have been for the first time, pundits acknowledge, Asian. As long as they owned four-wheel drive vehicles. Very exciting times.

Struggling

But back to Asda Woman. What does she really think of things? The image might be of a cheery working mum who puts her bum as if to say the exercise classes are working but look closer and, like the rest of us, she's struggling with work and childcare, wondering how to make it all add up. Last week a report called mums the most downtrodden of all minorities. It was dumbstruck - after everything, it's bewildering to find it's more to do with my kin than the colour of my skin. Young mothers do get a rotten deal but when is their lot going to improve? The Government has introduced Sure Start and paternity leave (pity so many dads take off long before then) but there is still a long way to go with equality for women. Most women have to work part-time, weekends or long, long evenings. Like Asda Woman herself. Whether stacking shelves, working on the till or clearing, she's not likely to be earning that much. In a world where we get excited that women tennis players are finally getting the same pay as men, this is all very depressing. We are promised better childcare but will that be delivered and when? By the time the kids are all grown up and the next generation of women will have decided that they can't sacrifice their careers so aren't going to have any. Perhaps Wonder Woman and Asda Woman are the same. Except for the leotard, of course.

By AMANDA REVELL WALTON

THE atmosphere is electric. As the pounding music changes from Fever into The Stripper, five gyrating women slowly remove red and black bangles.

Moments later the audience bursts into applause as each dancer lifts the open parasol they are carrying, revealing all. But these five feisty women are not professional strippers.

They are a group of friends - three mums, an estate agent and a care worker - who are letting it all hang out to raise money for a little girl called Rosie.

The five-year-old is severely autistic and epileptic. She needs £17,000 a year for an intensive treatment programme.

It is money her housewife mum, Kara Westerman, 31, and website designer dad, Andy Morris, 35, simply don't have.

The couple, who also have a two-year-old daughter called Grace, had tried all the usual ways to raise money but they were nowhere near reaching their target.

Having reached crisis point, Kara got her friends together in her hometown of Stratford, Glouce, to try to figure out a way of raising the cash they needed for Rosie's treatment.

Mum-of-two Bonnie Cleeton, 31, is one of Kara's pals. She is married to insurance agent and brings up their two sons Ollie, three, and Roman, two in nearby Nailsworth.

She says: "We got mums and mums carried away and more outrageous. Then someone said, 'How about a Full Monty show?' And it just snowballed from there."

Exciting

Kara says: "My first reaction was, 'No way! I'd rather jump out of an aeroplane five times over than do that!' And I am terrified of heights."

"But we knew, as soon as we thought of the idea, that that was it. It was really exciting - and terrifying at the same time."

The third member of the group is single mum Goldy Mandi-Fe, who has two children, 12-year-old Joe and Lily, five.

She says: "We needed more dancers so we rang quite a few people - most of them said, 'Sorry, no way!'"

But it didn't take long before another two friends, estate agent Eile Richardson, 35, and Alex Chalk, 35, agreed to get involved.

Over the next three months the girls met up three times a week to practice.

Goldy says: "We started off doing the dancing, and it was hilarious. We were quite unsexy, really!"

Luckily another friend, Jo Smith, 27, a professional choreographer, agreed to work with the girls on their routine.

Kara says: "It's very burlesque - and very theatrical - but at all sexy or sleazy. There's a lot of winks and blowing of kisses - we wanted it to be as silly as possible."

In fact, preparing for their daring performance had unexpected benefits. Kara says: "We learned to start making more time for ourselves - outside of our roles of mums, housewives and career women. We started eating healthily, toning up, getting fit and looking after ourselves."

Bonnie agrees: "I've definitely discovered a new feminine side to myself - especially after having kids and being a housewife."

"Before it was all about housework and putting food on the table. I rediscovered a side of me I'd almost forgotten about."

When the day of their first performance arrived, the girls were terrified.

Goldy says: "We were so nervous beforehand. We had a giant of wine before we went out there. We didn't know what the audience's reaction would be. What would happen if they just stood there in silence?"

But Goldy and the rest of the troupe needn't have worried. The noise was thunderous when they took to the stage.

Kara says: "I'll never forget the sound of that first night. It was truly amazing. People were screaming, shouting, whistling. The atmosphere was electric. For the first three moves it felt like you were concrete and

We do the Full Monty to help sick little Rosie



FUNDS... Rosie and Kara

HOW FIVE PALS RAISED £10,000 AND GOT A NEW ZEST FOR LIFE

then we all got really into it. We were looking at each other and smiling and laughing - just going 'Wow!'"

Then the moment came for the enthusiastic amateurs to live up to their stage name - The Full Monty Girls.

Eile says: "I don't think at that moment in time any of us thought about the fact that we were about to expose our naked bodies to the world. All I was worried about was getting my knickers off without falling over and keeping in time to the music!"

Kara adds: "It puts you on a complete adrenalin rush. There's nothing like it."

The girls had thought it would be a one-off performance, but a few months later Kara called on her friends again for help.

She and husband Andy were £10,000 short of the money needed to pay for the second year of Rosie's treatment. Kara says: "We'd

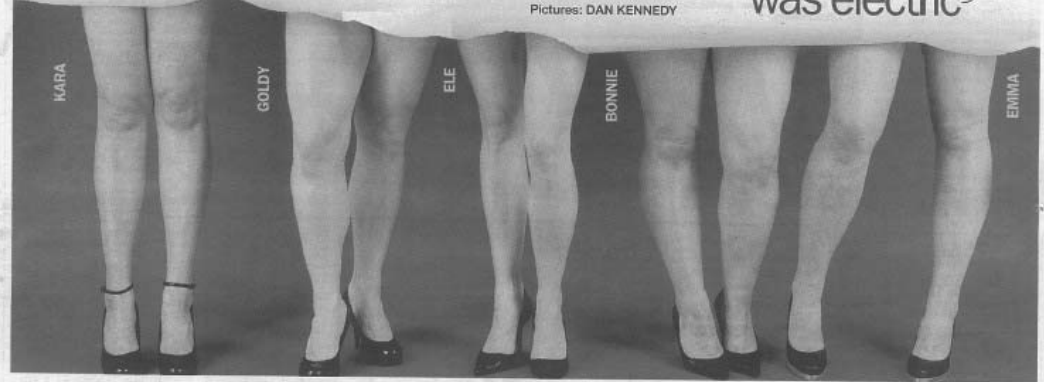


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Pictures: DAN KENNEDY

“People were screaming, shouting, whistling - the atmosphere was electric”



EMMA, BONNIE, GOLDY, EILE, KARA

raised £2,500 from that one-off performance, so I saw the girls and asked them if they were up - then they started cheering and clapping. They were going mad by the end!"

Kara says: "Every single one of us brings a different element into it. I can't stop smiling - so I'm the smile!"

Eile is the really classy one. Goldy has the X factor - in whatever she does.

"Emma has us in stitches all the time, so she's the joker. And Bonnie has the Fern factor - she's the Fern Britton of the group. She's got the sex appeal, thing going on."

And what is probably the most refreshing thing about The Full Monty Girls is that they are all real women - ranging from size 10 to 18, and from a bust size of 34C to a 40DD.

Eile says: "Our toughest audience was in London. It was a cabaret night and we were the last act. The crowd had been heckling all the other acts - they'd even been screaming

at some of them to 'Get off! We were very worried, but when the music started they shut up - then they started cheering and clapping. They were going mad by the end!"

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**HOT THIS WEEK**  
BIG Bags are still the number one choice for A-listers and fashionistas this season and we love the fab real leather limited-edition offerings from Warehouse. This metallic silver version with its zip detailing ticks several boxes for spring's hot trends. Also available in black for a more classic look, they're £80 from Warehouse.

**FACT**  
We've got the biggest boobs

**BRITISH** girls have the biggest and best boobs in Europe.

A survey by underwear retailers shows our average bra size has now reached a whopping D-cup. And now, if you've got 'em, you can show 'em in the low-cut styles currently on the high street.

If you aren't so blessed up top, forget the boob job and work on what you've got.

As you can see from our model on the right, it just means that you can opt for more revealing styles. With so many styles available, it would be a shame not to show them off.

Here **CHLOE WOOD** shows you how to make the most of your cleavage, whatever you're an A-cup or a D-cup.

**A CUP LOOK 1**  
Dress, £99, Zara; scarf, £17, Principles; bag, £35, Faith; bra, £25, Wonderbra

**A CUP LOOK 2**  
Shirt, £39, Zara; bra, £35, Ted Baker at Figleaves.com; waistcoat, £30, belt, £20, both Topshop; brooch, £1, Freedom at Topshop; jeans, £14.99, H&M

**D CUP LOOK 1**  
Jacket, £90, French Connection; cami, £50, Snob at House of Fraser; necklace, £15, bangles, £45, both at Freedom at Topshop; jeans, £45, Star by Julien Macdonald at Debenhams

**D CUP LOOK 2**  
Top, £30, Miss Selfridge; belt, £10, New Look; earrings, £8, Essence at Evans; jeans, £40, Topshop

**D CUP LOOK 3**  
Jacket, £65, Warehouse; shirt, £28, Topshop; bra, £43, Miss Holliday at Figleaves.com; jeans, £45, Star by Julien Macdonald at Debenhams; sunglasses, £12, Topshop

**ESKIMO** tops double up as great underwear as long as the sun is shining up on your bosom's acid brought under a low-cut top.

ESKIMO tops double up as great underwear as long as the sun is shining up on your bosom's acid brought under a low-cut top.

If you need good support under a cami and want to disguise the straps then slip one of spring's little jackets over the top. Go for a deep V-neck style.

Butterfly tops are great for bigger boobs, with their low square necks and nipped-in waists. They're also great for disguising bigger arms - the dangled bngos work.