

streamline  
**True-life**

# I was **FAT**... now I'm the **Dancing Queen!**



These days I can throw some real shapes!

By Carrie Clark, 37,  
from Crawley, Sussex

As I walked into the dance studio, I held my head high. I was the teacher here. This was my world. So why did I feel so deflated the moment everyone's attention turned to me?

Because it didn't take a genius to work out what my adult friends were thinking... *Wow, she's fat!* After 10 years in the industry, I knew what people expected of a dance expert...

*A Lycra-clad stick insect!* So it must've come as a shock when I waded in. *All 18st of me.* It made me need to prove myself even more. Right, no messing around, I smiled. 'Straight to it.' I powered into my first routine, I tucked my stuff... but back home later, I bathed myself. If I was a, I couldn't do so

depressed,' I moaned.

It's not that I hadn't tried.

I'd been on a diet forever, counting calories every day.

**Dancers are meant to be Lycra-clad stick insects**

But after having my son Bobby at 18, and then daughter Jodie two years later, the baby fat wouldn't shift. You'd think my job would've helped. All that dancing... No. Thing was, I worked evenings. I'd dash off to work, no time to cook myself a proper meal. Sausage rolls and chocolate from the local



**Dumpy diva**

garage filled the gap.

A bit too well...

I ballooned. Until, in 2006, I was 18st.

'It doesn't make sense,' I said to the doctor.

'I dance and go to the gym...'  
*Am I ill?*

But tests came back negative. I was healthy. *Just fat!* Heartbreaking.

It wasn't just the looks from the class which sent my confidence plummeting...

*It was that 'look' every time I bought food, that 'look' every time I went clothes shopping.*

And then the name-calling

**Don't try this at home!**

in the street.

'Leave me alone!' I wanted to scream.

But responding to catcalls made them worse.

So I kept my tears for home.

My GP sympathised.

'I'll refer you for a gastric bypass,' he said.

They'd operate to reduce the size of my stomach, so only a tiny amount of food could pass through.

And in March 2007, I checked into St Richard's Hospital in Chichester, underwent the three-hour keyhole surgery.

Waking up, my first thought was the usual...

'Starving!' I said.

A nurse brought my first meal: an eggcup's worth of watery mashed potato and another egg cup's worth of watery carrot.

Mind you, for my new tiny tum, it was a feast!

In a month, I lost 3st. Every month after, I lost another stone.

My weight dropped, confidence blossomed. I couldn't stop grinning. People didn't recognise me!

*And now? I'm 8½st, a size-8!*

I don't feel fat and frumpy any more.

I'm still teaching classes, but I'm not the fat lump on the dancefloor.

*Now, I'm a real dancing queen!*



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