

# GROUCHY GIRLS 2018

## JULY 2018

A planning meeting for this new group was held at The Willowbrook on the second Tuesday of July. This arrangement will continue and the next meeting is on 14th August; all welcome. One feminist grouch is any group that is not inclusive, so any men who wish to attend are welcome, if in full drag.

At each meeting three grouches will be discussed: - 1 general, 1 local and 1 related to women. After each grouch please change places.

I suggested that we avoided Religion, Politics and Sex, but as this was greeted with cries of "What, no sex? - we will review.

A grouch was raised that **prisoners should not be allowed conjugal visits** as they are in prison as a punishment. All agreed bar one, who felt that rehabilitation was important and keeping relationships alive would help.

Grouch 2 was an objection to **workmen showing their bum cleavages**. One GG said she could have parked her bike when a workman was mending her washing machine! Cries of 'cover up' and horrified groans, then a lone voice said 'I haven't seen a male bum for many years and appreciate the odd glimpse'. Time to visit a sculpture exhibition, and we won't tell if you touch!

**Why don't more bras fasten at the front?** A cleavage developed in the group on this topic as some GGs said 'just do the fastener up at the front then swizzle the bra round'. One GG then told us a fascinating story of modelling for a bra firm. We need to keep abreast of this grouch, so bring your information on where to buy front fastening bras to the next meeting.

Thanks to Mary for keeping notes, as we all speaking at the same time! In future, at each table, only the person holding a wooden spoon can speak.

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## AUGUST 2018

35 very jolly Grouchy Girls were at the August meeting and discussed the following topics:

### **Mobility Scooters and Cycles on the pavement**

GGs agree that only children supervised by adults should be riding on the pavement. It is frightening when mobility scooters or cycles appear from behind you without ringing a bell and they don't take account of some people having hearing loss.

As well as bells it would be good if cyclists had helmets, high vis. jackets and lights on for their safety and ours.

Cyclists and mobility scooter users should have to be trained and insured like car drivers, and observe the same road rules. Mobility Scooter manuals have guidance that is often ignored and some of them are so big.

### **Potholes and Roadworks**

Potholes are a danger to cyclists and pushchairs. When awaiting repair they should be marked so we see them. After frost quick repairs would prevent cracks getting bigger. We'd appreciate more coordination between companies who dig up our patchy roads and to prioritise the patchy roads for resurfacing. Recently a man with a bucket was seen repairing the potholes! We wondered if there is coordination when different roadworks take place near each other and block us in. Creative thinking- if the pipes etc were under the pavement they could be repaired with little traffic disruption!

Westdale Lane! Having complained about the potholes we're now going to have a moan about them closing the roads and redirecting the buses while doing repairs. Well, we are supposed to be grouchy! We wondered if they couldn't be done in two stages to avoid this level of disruption.

## **Are UK women able to accept Compliments Gracefully?**

Maybe not, due to embarrassment. We may respond with 'What this old thing' etc so room for improvement. Keep on giving the positive comments and be rewarded with a smile.

European men give more compliments than our UK variety but how often do we compliment them?

Some GGs admitted to the wolf whistles received in their youth even if not politically correct!

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## **SEPTEMBER 2018**

Once the cappuccinos were ready, over 30 jolly ladies settled themselves down in The Willowbrook to start grouching. Those poor souls trying to have their breakfast in peace ended up being amused, we hope in a good way, by the lively debates.

### **Parking on pavements**

Gave us food for thought. Narrow roads built with no garages often leave no option but to park half on the pavement, but this is difficult and dangerous for those using pushchairs, wheelchairs and for the visually impaired. Overhanging bushes and trees can make this worse. On Willow lane residents sometimes have to contact the police when cars parked by parents taking children to school mean no emergency service vehicles, or bin lorries could get through.

Suggestions

- one side of the road only for cars to park (are there too many cars for this to work)?
- cut your hedge back if it overhangs the path
- push your wing mirrors in

### **Is on-line shopping a good thing?**

Some of us like 'real' shopping:- feel that fabric, try it on, smell the fruit and see what is in season. Some people do not have a computer and others are concerned about online fraud. You will pay a bit extra to have the milkman but nowadays they have a large range of groceries and more. Don't underestimate the importance of 'real' shopping for people who are socially isolated; it may be the only conversation they have in days. If online shopping kills the high street there will be less social interaction and jobs will be lost.

BUT... how useful online shopping can be for busy working families, the housebound and those living in remote places. Also, it is a lot easier to return goods now, as many shops give this service. We worry about children's shoes being bought online as measuring growing feet is important, and be aware; one GG reported that when her son's clothes order arrived from the USA he had to pay £15 tax! Is Donald to blame?

### **Buying clothes**

Followed by 'How did we do?' surveys. We love the delete button!

None of us know what size we are any more as each shop is different. Sales ploy is to make the old Size 16 a 14, as us gullible ladies may buy in order to persuade ourselves we are svelte!

Where can we buy shoes that are available in half sizes? And boy oh boy do we hate those tall thin models when we want to know what that frock would look like on a normal woman with curves.

Grrrrrrrrrr!

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## OCTOBER 2018

### Paper Bags

Bring back paper bags! Us Grouchy Girls do not understand why, if Primark uses paper bags, all clothes shops don't. Well done Morrison's for giving paper instead of plastic for some fruit and veg. Top marks for the Coop for their biodegradable bags (they turn to snowflakes if you store your flip-flops in them over the winter) and they plan to have compostable bags later this year! Some folks sad now that they are buying plastic bags for rubbish instead of using shopping bags.

We are all very good at using our own shopping bags and not asking for plastic ones.

### Summer

Remember our hot summer? A few GGs were irritated by noisy kids and BBQ smells but most were happy that people were enjoying being outside. Children should let off steam but adults have responsibility to not let noise continue late at night.

### Ladies Loos

The fire alarms went off at the Willowbrook as the GGs became very heated on this topic. You men do not know about the crush in the Ladies when we go to the theatre or cinema. Aghh! More cubicles please! One GG suggested taking a 'She Wee,' but we couldn't think what we'd do with it after! In stores we'd like the loo to be better signed, and an improvement in toilet roll dispensers.

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## NOVEMBER 2018

### Water conservation- Do we need to shower every day?

Not just grouching, lots of action points made by the 36 GGs on this subject. A quick shower uses much less than a bath and Severn Trent give out timers to encourage this. You could even direct your waste water to a water butt connected to the outlet pipe. Too much showering dries your skin, so depending on weather and activity, a good wash down is fine. We don't sweat so much now we're older and wearing natural fibres helps us to stay fresh. We should turn off taps when cleaning our teeth, and if we see them left running in public loos. Water meters would help, but so would the water companies mending the leaks!

### School children who don't offer us wrinklies a seat on the bus

Ooh we did get a bit worked up! After moaning about youngsters today having no manners, we conceded that even we were known to behave differently when our parents weren't around! Kids behave worse when in groups but if spoken to politely will move that school bag to let you sit down. We don't like the swearing and many of us avoid school bus times. What about the adults who use seats for disabled? Some foreigners have cultural differences over queuing but more likely to offer seats to oldies.

### Are skin creams value for money?

Or should we learn to love our wrinkles? Consensus seems to be that expensive creams no better than the cheap ones and many GG beauties like Nivea and Aldi. Expensive creams have a tiny quantity in lots of packaging. We know that the adverts' claims are unreal and a lot of money made by pharmaceuticals, but we like to have the confidence of looking our best.

TOP TIPS! Try Anusol to reduce those bags under your eyes and feel better about your wrinkles by getting a pug dog. Wrinkles are life and we're more likely to be offered a seat if we grow old gracefully!

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## DECEMBER 2018

### Christmas cards in the shops from August and TV ads from October?

Is it just commercial profiteering?

General agreement that it all starts too early so by Christmas we're jaded; and what about the poor parents of young children? The 12 days of Christmas begin on Christmas Eve, but waiting for 1st December seemed to be a popular idea. Santa's Grotto in November makes little ones think Christmas is imminent. Shock horror; there really is a Santa Paws grotto in Nottingham to take your pooch to.

CLOSE THE SHOPS at least on Christmas and Boxing Day.

Cards - many young folk just send festive emails, but at our age if old friends don't receive a card they might think we're dead! Stamps, so expensive, but one GG remembered that when the Penny Black revolutionised the post, stamps were half price for Christmas. What a memory and she looked really good for her age!

### Litter- is Nottingham particularly bad and what can we do about it?

One GG said research has shown that people only carry litter for 26 steps, so more bins please. Chewing gum is disgusting and expensive to remove. Some GGs tell offenders 'Excuse me, but you've dropped something', and the worse they've experienced is a rude response. One GG said she admonished a driver who chucked rubbish from a car by knocking on his window and saying 'Not all police are in uniform' and it worked a treat. So go for it girls, and do your sweet old lady face! Recently a heavy fine was given to a builder who was dumping waste on the site of the Earl of Chesterfield pub. One GG suggested anyone on Benefits should be made to clean up litter, but this was divisive. A witty GG said that might include people who collect a pension! Most agreed that offenders doing community service could do litter picking.

### Do we need to use chemicals to clean our homes?

The GGs felt that the chemicals cannot be filtered out completely and tap water often has an unpleasant tang. Loads of tried and tested advice followed:

- A spray bottle of white vinegar cleans hobs, tiles and even burnt on bits. Add a bit of salt if necessary.
- Lemon gets rid of lime-scale and one GG puts the peel around the tap with an elastic band
- Newspaper for windows does work
- Pour cooled fat into old yogurt pots to keep your drains clean
- Bi-carb wiped around cups to remove stains
- Use newspaper instead of toilet roll (this was booed)
- Don't bother with fabric conditioner - waste of money
- Steam cleaners are great, especially if you have pets
- Giving up cleaning means no chemicals (this raised a cheer)

