

Andy's virtually fat-free – from 24 stones to 15 stones

Nine stones lighter and a new man



BEFORE: Andy weighed in at 24 stones

Andy George tipped the scales at just over 24 stones – now his waist is trim, he's fitter and playing rugby again after losing a fantastic nine stones. To celebrate we asked Gloucestershire stylist and personal shopper **KATE PARKER** to take him for a makeover. **ROBIN BARKER** found out how they got on



If you were to ask yourself what you were doing last year on Tuesday, March 29, you might struggle to remember, but for Gloucestershire Media's graphic designer Andy George, 28, it's a day he remembers all too well.

He describes it as "the day I set about changing my life forever".

Tipping the scales at just over 24 stones, Andy was the largest he had ever been and something had to change. "I had got to the point in my life where I had accepted I was a big person, but always knew I had to do something," he said.

So that day, Andy decided to join Churchdown Slimming World group for his first weigh-in.

"When the scales said 24.2 stones it didn't really shock me. If anything it acted as a massive kick up the backside and really made my mission clear."

Since then Andy has gone on to lose a staggering nine stones, which is the equivalent of 57 bags of sugar, 13 bags of potatoes and 488 copies of The Citizen or The Echo.

He lists willpower and perseverance as the main motivator behind his remarkable weight loss, along with a bit of healthy competition with his mother and sister, who also attend the weekly meetings.

Losing weight is traditionally a female preoccupation as showcased in the recent Weight Watchers TV advert starring Alesha Dixon, formerly of Strictly Come Dancing.

Yet Andy is an example of a growing trend among men who are taking the decision to lose weight.

He said: "I adapted to the group's eating plan really quickly and started reading up on what I could and couldn't have."

In the first week he lost a stone and by the end of



the first month it was up to just over two stones. "I started to notice clothes becoming looser," he said. Andy's waist size was a mammoth 46-48 inches and he is now down to 34-36 inches, a loss of 10 to 12 inches. He is well known at his weekly meetings as slimmer of the week and also slimmer of the month. His Slimming World booklet is filled with stickers celebrating his goals and having hit his target weight of 15 stones, he no longer has to pay to attend meetings. Andy has really started to feel the difference. "I was becoming fitter and exercising more often. My sister and I entered the Cheltenham Circular challenge and completed a 13-mile walk, something neither of us would have ever imagined doing six months ago."

He is also getting back into local rugby – two years after a dislocated shoulder and his weight gain put paid to any involvement in the game.

Not only has it improved his quality of life, but Andy also hopes it will act as inspiration for other men struggling with weight issues.

"I hope my story inspires them to start their own journey," he said.

To find out more about Slimming World classes, call 0844 897 8000 or join online www.slimmingworld.com



ANDY'S TYPICAL SATURDAY

BEFORE . . .
Breakfast: Bacon and fried mushroom sandwiches, butter, tomato sauce, milky coffee (several cups throughout the day).
Lunch: Tuna, full fat mayo and cheese sandwiches, crisps, sausage roll, full fat coke.
Dinner: Chinese takeaway, usually a fried rice dish or chow mein or both – following 10-12 pints at the pub.
AFTER:
Breakfast: Two Weetabix, banana, 250ml semi-skimmed milk.
 Daily snacks of fruit, Slimming World cereal bar and drinks of black coffee and water.
Lunch: Salad or cous cous loaded with veg and chicken or tuna, low fat yoghurt.
Dinner: Slimming World recipes, for example vegetable soup or bolognaise.

NOW: Andy at a trim 15 stones 2lbs



Andy gets some style advice from Kate Parker

SLIMLINE STYLE

STYLIST and personal shopper Kate Parker said: "When someone puts on a significant amount of weight their choice of clothes is greatly limited."

"When you've lost the weight, suddenly there is a world of choice and you can feel out of touch. I wanted to show Andy a variety of stylish looks to reflect his creative personality and demonstrate how he can have fun with fashion."

What to wear while you're losing weight:

- Make sure you dress for the size you are now in clothes that fit you well. Baggy clothes will always make you look bigger.
- Reward yourself with some new shoes, or a great belt, as you reach your goals.
- Good grooming adds polish to your look. A great haircut is always worth the investment.
- The right clothes and accessories can streamline your silhouette. Vertical panels are especially effective at dividing and elongating the body.
- Don't hold on to the larger clothes you have slimmed down from 'just in case'. Say goodbye to them and hello to the new you.
- www.kateparkerstyle.com or call 01242 620687/ 07773 363589



Verdict

ANDY said: "Kate did a brilliant job getting together four different looks for me to try. After only a brief chat she nailed down a great variety of outfits."

"Kate made me feel at ease and allowed me to relax and really enjoy it. It has definitely made me consider what type of clothes I would go for in the future."

■ **The suit:** I haven't worn or owned a suit for a long time so it was good to see what I would look like if I decided to go super smart. It was a really good fit and the shirt finished the look off well.

■ **The Mod look:** This is by far my favourite look. I loved

everything about it, especially the skinny jeans. I've always gone for the baggier style but this really changed my mind. I felt I wouldn't have been out of place in Brighton during the 1960s.

■ **Casual:** This was more like what I wear on a day-to-day basis. I definitely have a more casual style. My favourite item was the retro print T-shirt which was right up my street.

■ **Military:** It was a close call between this and the Mod look for my favourite. Everything about this was cool, especially the coat. Although this probably wouldn't be something I'd wear on a day-to-day basis I felt really comfortable in the outfit.



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All clothes available from Cavendish House, Cheltenham

1. Military look: Tommy Hilfiger skinny indigo jeans reduced from £845 to £50, navy double-breasted military jacket, £280 and striped top, £70, both by Ralph Lauren Denim & Supply, black boots £59
2. Casual look: Dark wash jeans, £105, T-shirt, £45, and olive green jacket, £160, all by Paul Smith
3. Mod look: Black skinny jeans by Tommy Hilfiger reduced from £80 to £50; gingham button-down shirt, £60, black knitted waistcoat, £50 and green mac, £135, all by Peter Werth; Ted Baker desert boots, reduced from £120 to £72; Hugo Boss brown belt, £60, Paul Smith scarf reduced from £49 to £34
4. The suit: Black suit, £420, white shirt with stripe panel, £99, belt, £59, all by Hugo Boss; black lace-up shoes from Dune, £80