



Lizzie Cundy, Kate Garraway and Mariah Carey don't shy away from shorter hemlines



**Some choose to update their wardrobe as they get older, for others it's an outdated notion**

# Should we start dressing our age?

**No**

**'It's not about clinging on to your youth'**

*Mary Novakovich, 54, is a freelance journalist and travel writer. She lives in*

*Bishop's Stortford with her husband, Adam, 54.*

Clothes usually associated with middle-aged women can most often be translated into frumpy, boring and not remotely sexy. At 54, I don't plan on conforming to that stereotype. I don't believe that style has a cut-off point. I'm still wearing the same sort of clothes I was wearing 10 and 20 years ago, not because I'm clinging on to my youth but because they suit me and I'm comfortable in them.

When I was in my 20s and 30s, I loved wearing short skirts and dresses, and big boots. I'm still doing that, mainly because I like the look, and I'm lucky enough to be roughly the same size as I was then (give or take 10lb).

Whenever I hear fashion commentators say things like, 'Women over 40 should never



Mary says her style from younger days still suits her

wear leather trousers,' I feel insulted and think they obviously haven't been to Paris – the fashion capital of the world. There you'll see women elegantly striding about in leather trousers well into their 60s and 70s. They wear them with confidence and don't care what anyone else thinks. That's the sort of role model I prefer.

**Yes**

**'The days of wearing tiny skirts are gone'**

*Kate Morris is a journalist and novelist, and lives in West London with her husband*

*Luke, 57, and their two teenage children.*

In my teens, my hair was dyed pink and green and my favourite trousers were yellow PVC. At about the same time as the Stranglers and The Jam were cool, I was stopped by a magazine in King's Road, and they took my photograph because I was wearing a man's tailcoat.

I can't pinpoint the exact moment I started to dress in a more sombre manner, but now in my mid-50s, it's still possible to look cool in a more sophisticated way. My 14-year-old daughter would be embarrassed if I dressed in similar clothes to her. She looks stylish in tiny vests and baggy tracksuit bottoms, whereas I would look ridiculous. I don't like



Kate won't be donning yellow PVC trousers any longer

revealing my cleavage, and one of my pet hates is seeing older women with sun-wrinkled skin in low tops – it's so ageing. Women of my age look so much better in clothes like flared trousers and good-fitting jackets. The days of windswept hair, tiny skirts, and see-through lacy tops are gone, and to be honest, I don't miss them.