

Punishing diet changed my life

Picture: ELOISA WILDSMITH

By **Natalie Chalk**

TV DESIGNER Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen's wife Jackie has shed five stone in as many months on a punishing 500 calories a day diet.

Jackie, 44, who says she hasn't felt so good for years, turned her back on junk food and gin and tonics to follow the controversial liquid-based regime.

She has slimmed down from size 18 to 12 with the LighterLife food plan, where meals are replaced by milkshakes and soup. The diet, which has around 15,000 followers, also includes drinking up to four litres of water a day.

Jackie, who has slimmed down from 16 stone to 11, said: "I'm not an ambassador for LighterLife, but I have felt so well on this diet - better than I've felt for ages.

"The milkshakes give me all the nutrients and vitamins I need, so I'm probably better nourished now than I have been at any point in my adult life.

"The diet required a huge commitment and you have to get quite obsessive about it or you'd never manage it. I did find it difficult not being able to eat what my family was eating and I used to love the smell of hamburgers."

Trainer

Three years ago Jackie insisted that she had no desire to shed any weight.

She said she did not feel threatened by the celebrity culture of thin women that surrounded her 44-year-old husband, who presents the BBC's *Changing Rooms*.

Jackie said she started the diet plan to support a friend, although she had already begun losing weight with a personal trainer. She walks 36 miles a week.

She added: "This was about losing enough weight so I wasn't at an increased risk from diseases such as diabetes.

"I'm not Laurence's dumpy wife any more. There used to be the odd comment in the papers suggesting that, somehow, I didn't deserve my husband because I wasn't thin."







She added: "I feel losing weight somehow empowered me. I didn't do it because of pressure from anyone else and I didn't do it to look better. I did it because of health reasons. I know people who have developed health prob-

Picture: DOMINIC O'NEILL



Jackie with husband Laurence before she dieted and, left, her new shape

A DAY IN THE LIFE ON LIGHTERLIFE

-  **9am:** Porridge when you get to work
-  **11am:** Coffee or LighterLife water flavourings which include Fruits of the Forest, St Clements and Sunrise Orange
-  **1pm:** Soup - choose from Thai chilli, mushroom, tomato, chicken or vegetable. Dieters can add pepper and Tabasco sauce for variety
-  **3pm:** Black tea (from the leaf) or LighterLife Savoury Broth
-  **5pm:** Snack bar - choose from fruit, lemon, toffee, crispy cranberry and raspberry or crispy peanut bars
-  **7pm:** A shake - with a choice of chocolate, banana, strawberry or vanilla - chocolate can be served hot or you can add a teaspoon of coffee into a vanilla shake for variety

lems because of their weight and I didn't want that to happen to me, with a young family to bring up."

Jackie has a history of unsuccessful dieting. Her mother

put her on one when she was just 11 years old.

But she carried on eating in secret and weighed 14 stone when she married Laurence in her early twenties.