

NEVER MIND THE BOTOX

Media coverage

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My Mum is an author!



Joanna Berry (left) and Penny Avis (right)

When Joanna Berry's young son recently received a visit at school from a well known children's book author, he proudly proclaimed; "My Mum is an author too!"

Despite not having read his mum's debut novel, Joanna's five-year-old, seems to be instantly aware of his mum's new vocation. 'Alex', is the first, of a four part book series called: 'Never Mind The Botox' with subsequent titles 'Rachel', 'Stella' and 'Meredith' to follow. The series about four professional women, all working on the sale of high profile cosmetic surgery business, the Beau Street Group, is co-written with Joanna's long-term friend Penny Avis and published by Matador this June.

Joanna, an Oxford graduate, was a successful corporate lawyer in London for many years, and no stranger to success, and the life of 'high-flying' career women. She and Penny have drawn upon their extensive experiences of working in the city as a top lawyer and accountant respectively but wish to confirm, their novels are not autobiographical.

But blissfully unaware of any corporate deal previously secured by their hard working mum, Joanna's sons (she also has an 8 year old) along with her 12 year old daughter, now have a more tangible measure of success, and have every reason to be proud of their mum.

The launch events and press conferences, have already projected their mum onto the cover of a local glossy publication, accompanied by extensive book signing dates with Waterstones. The extremely positive reviews in

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magazines such as, 'Now Magazine', have given the new authors a taste of what is to come. The highlights so far, have been a chat with Andrew Marr at the Galaxy National Book Awards, and praise from revered critics, such as Eve Pollard!

Despite her fantastic career and her admirable four book publishing deal in the highly competitive world of fiction writing, Joanna seems nothing like the career driven character, portrayed in the book. Quite taken aback by her novel's success, she is extremely modest and down-to-earth. Joanna chats to us over a coffee at Hooper's café in Wilmslow, about her past year, and the journey from the book idea, to a published novel.

As we exchange stories about the kids, like most mums, we quickly establish that we have a lot of common ground. Joanna, is one of those women who immediately make you feel like you want her to be your best friend! Witty and intelligent, her succinct sense of humour is radiant, and replicates throughout the book, with her delightful descriptions of everyday situations, with comical interpretation we all can relate to.

Unlike Alex, the corporate city lawyer and heroine of the book, Joanna has achieved her ambitions, and has now stepped away from the relentless working life she had, and made a conscious choice to spend time with her family.

'Something had to give', she recalls. 'I did work around my family, and tried different models of full-time, part-time and flexible hours, to carry on working as a lawyer after I started a family. After my third child was born, I finally decided to take some time out, and focus my attention on renovating our family home in Wilmslow and working part time for 'Children in Need.' The charity work, as well as starting to write, was something I had always wanted to do. Having children changes you, and the work for 'Children in Need,' reflects that as a Mum, my priorities, and outlook, have somewhat changed.'

MIXING BUSINESS WITH PLEASURE

Never Mind The Botox



Alex

PENNY AVIS & JOANNA BERRY

local mums

'I liked my job in law, and I equally enjoyed taking time out to go to baby groups and chat to other mums, but always felt that I wanted to retain something for myself, such as the writing. It is really important to me that I am a good role model to my children, and I think going for something you really want, and following a passion is a great example for them. I want them to feel empowered, so they can follow their ambitions and be creative.'

Making the transition from lawyer to author might seem somewhat unusual, but Joanna thinks it can be quite typical for legal experts, or accountants like Penny, to be very creative people.

'Words and writing have always been part of my job, and you have to be creative in law, as you are often building a case or drafting a contract from scratch, like putting a puzzle together. Creating our characters and story was no different. We were quite methodical and had regular meetings and brainstorming sessions, drawing up our story, and bringing the characters to life. We developed the characters together, ensuring they were all different, but plausible personalities. Then we worked on the central plot, which would form a backdrop for all of the books. We then separately worked on short synopses of each of the books, meeting regularly to cross edit, and ensure consistency. Two heads are always better than one. We had great fun dreaming up the characters, and story lines, which we subsequently toned down to protect the not-so-innocent, and our own reputations.'

When we got our hands on a review copy of 'Alex', here at Cheshire Mums Magazine several months ago, we could not wait to delve into it. The eye-catching title, evokes an immediate nostalgic response, inviting your curiosity. We thoroughly enjoyed the book as you are instantly immersed into the central character, and her

Attempting to keep all her plates spinning simultaneously, not wishing to neglect others she holds dear, ironically, she neglects her own needs...

inexorable world, in which she works, and plays. As her responsibilities increase, in her role as the lead on a corporate deal, so does her confidence. Attempting to keep all her plates spinning simultaneously, not wishing to neglect others she holds dear, ironically, she neglects her own needs. Offering a fascinating view into the world of cosmetic surgery, celebrity secrets and working life in the city, the book will entice you into the chain of events, as if you were there. With its descriptive narrative, it delivers humour, sarcasm, jealousy, avarice, and much more.

The book gathers momentum, and starts to forge tributaries of plots and characters, combining a perfect blend of ingredients for a best-seller.

It has been written competently, punctuated efficiently, and has perfectly placed vocabulary tutorials. This book, and the subsequent ones, would easily transcend from page to screen, so watch this space!

Joanna and Penny's diaries are now filled with promotional engagements, and their new literary world presents exciting opportunities that require a certain amount of travel and physical appearances. But overall it has been extremely rewarding to get the project off the ground, and it has enabled both mums to spend quality time with their families, as well as pursuing their creative interests. The two friends have been involved in the whole publishing process, including the artwork for the book sleeves, which has seen Joanna and Penny's initial brief, translated into sleek, stylish and iconic looking covers, that are instantly recognisable.

It was a pleasure meeting with Joanna and we loved the book. So we shall join the growing fan base, and wait patiently for 'Rachel'.

Alex is the first book in the Never Mind the Botox series by Joanna Berry and Penny Avis, £6.99 published by Matador, available from all good bookshops.

Alex is the first book...

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Book Review: Never Mind the Botox

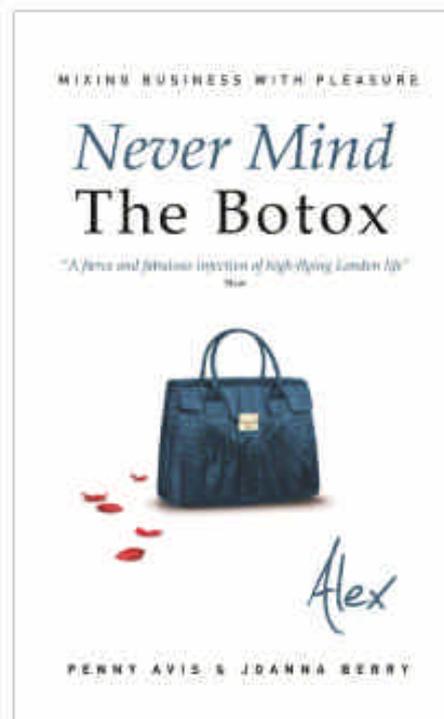
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If you have ever thought about writing a novel, as a route to self-employment, then here is some inspiration, from two career women who have done just that.

About the books

Never Mind the Botox is a book series about four professional women all working on the sale of high profile cosmetic surgery business the Beau Street Group. Each book reveals how the women cope with one of the most glamorous but challenging deals of their careers and the dramatic impact it has on their personal lives. With a briefcase in one hand and a glass of wine in the other, can they navigate their way through a surreal world of boob jobs by day and intrigue by night - and still keep their own love lives on track?

Alex Fisher is a high-flying lawyer close to making partner and busy planning her perfect wedding to Elliott. But life suddenly becomes complicated when she's faced with a hot junior lawyer on her team and an actress threatening to jeopardise the deal by exposing her dodgy surgery. Soon Alex is forced into a series of impossible choices that are all inextricably linked and life will never be the same again.

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Alex Fisher is a high-flying lawyer close to making partner and busy planning her perfect wedding to Elliott. But life suddenly becomes complicated when she's faced with a hot junior lawyer on her team and an actress threatening to jeopardise the deal by exposing her dodgy surgery. Soon Alex is forced into a series of impossible choices that are all inextricably linked and life will never be the same again.

I was sent a copy of "Alex" to review. I read it very quickly and couldn't put it down. I spent a couple of years buying and selling companies myself in the late 90s, on the accounting side, so the setting was very familiar to me and I thought, very well observed. I always enjoy reading a book where a strong woman character is a hero just for doing her job with professionalism. I know next to nothing about cosmetic surgery but the book painted a humorous and (I hope) slightly exaggerated version of what that world might be like. It had me giggling certainly, and I now want to get the rest of the books in order to visit the world again.

About the authors

Penny Avis trained as an accountant and worked as a high flying corporate finance partner at Deloitte, having previously survived the collapse of Arthur Andersen during the Enron crisis. After years of juggling a diary from hell with bringing up two young children - regularly running the mums' race in a trouser suit and her nanny's trainers - she took a career break and started writing. She is married and lives in London.

Joanna Berry graduated in Law with First Class Honours from Oxford University and after qualifying as a solicitor became a partner at Eversheds, specialising in media and intellectual property law. After having her third child she donned a hard hat, renovated a house and then took a job with Children in Need (highlights included sharing a stage with Pudsey bear). She is married and lives in Cheshire.

Reviews

"A fierce and fabulous injection of high-flying London life" - Now Magazine

"A modern tale of passion, intrigue and business skulduggery, intelligently observed and hugely entertaining." - Eve Pollard

"The must-have read of the summer. A brilliantly biting novel that does for cosmetic surgery what Absolutely Fabulous did for fashion." - Waterstones

Never Mind the Botox: Alex is out on June 10th 2011. You can pre-order a copy of **Alex** and **Rachel** (released in November) at the **Motivating Mum bookstore**

Competitions

To celebrate the launch of **Never Mind the Botox: Alex** on 10th June 2011, the authors are running a competition to win a spa weekend for two with www.spabreaks.com. For details on how to enter, see the stickers on the front of the books or go to www.avisberry.com. No purchase necessary. Terms and conditions apply, see website for details.

I have also got one copy of **Never Mind the Botox: Alex** to give away to one reader of my **Daily Dose of Motivation** series. To enter, just click the link and sign up for the newsletters, or if you are already signed up, reply to one of your daily emails and tell me you want to be entered in the competition. The winner will be chosen on 30th June.

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Joanna Berry and 18 others like this.



Photography

COMPETITION



London Mums' life can be very exciting and the backdrop of our iconic capital with its beautiful buildings and vibrant street life provides endless photo opportunities for mums and mumpreneurs on a daily basis. As busy London Mums, we all have a view of London that is unique and special to us.

London Mums has partnered with **a fish in sea** and **Never Mind the Botox** to launch the 'Through London Mums' Eyes' competition, giving mums and mumpreneurs passionate about photography the perfect excuse to get snapping around the capital; there are three great prizes to win:

* **1st Prize:**

A 1 hour intensive photography lesson with Photography Course London, Your own banner or product placement on the new London Mums interactive website for two months
A large size canvas print of the winning photo, 1 x signed copy of Never Mind the Botox: Alex

* **2nd Prize:**

2 adult tickets to the Design Museum, a medium size canvas print of the runner-up photo, a signed copy of Never Mind the Botox: Alex

* **3rd Prize:**

A signed copy of Never Mind the Botox: Alex

**TO ENTER: www.londonmums.org.uk
or [Twitter@londonmums](https://twitter.com/londonmums)**

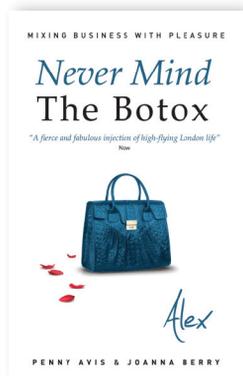
Deadline to submit your photos is 10th October 2011. The winning photo will also be published in the London Mums magazine issue 5 winter 2011/spring 2012 out mid October 2011.

Never mind the Botox

A fabulous new four book series mixing business with pleasure.

Never Mind the Botox is a series about four professional women all working on the sale of high profile cosmetic surgery business the Beau Street Group. Each book reveals how the women cope with one of the most glamorous but challenging deals of their careers, and the dramatic impact it has on their personal lives. With a briefcase in one hand and a glass of wine in the other, can they navigate their way through a surreal world of boob jobs by day and intrigue by night – and still keep their own love lives on track?

Alex is published in June. For more information go to www.avisberry.com



a fish in sea

A picture can speak a thousand words. In today's highly competitive and visually led marketplace, this has never been more true. The right image supports your brand, conveys intent and feeling, and reinforces your business message and tone of voice, in just a matter of seconds.

Penny Avis, co-author of Never Mind the Botox commented "We found *a fish in sea* through a series of internet searches. What first drew us to them was the broad range of services that they offered, and that they were just around the corner from us in Wandsworth. Although so much can be done online, I still liked the idea of being able to pop round to see them!

The team from *a fish in sea* designed our book covers, our website, a leaflet style flyer about the book series, business cards and compliment slips – all with a common brand identity. The photo of 'the bag' was a huge part of our design process and became the cornerstone of our brand image - being used across all of our media in different colours. The service they provided at every step was outstanding, fast, responsive, patient (as we deliberated!) and, very importantly, affordable.



Professional design by choice

Choosing your design agency is an important business decision. *a fish in sea* are an experienced, professional and locally accessible design agency. So, get in touch and see what a professional design can do for your business! Call us on 08000 58 24 50 or visit : www.afishinsea.co.uk

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Starting up on your own or revamping your existing corporate identity?
Save over £500.00 with the designers at *a fish in sea*!

The expert graphic designers at *a fish in sea* have introduced an amazing offer to the readers of London Mums - helping mumpreneurs make that all important first impression! A professional logo design and stationery package for just £500.00, thats a saving of over 50% from their normal prices.

Simply contact them on info@afishinsea.co.uk or call 08000 58 24 50 and mention discount code - LMPPhoto50

Offer valid until 30.09.11. Logo design = Logo package 1 (3 x initial design concepts, 3 x rounds revisions to any one concept). Stationery package = Business card master, letterhead and comp slip (2 x initial design concepts and 3 x rounds of revisions). Your statutory rights are not affected.