

## Character notes

### Ford Factory Workers:

#### Female

**Rita O' Grady:** Playing age 30s. Juggling being a wife, mother and factory worker. Rita is caring and good-natured with a strong sense of right and wrong. Initially she is not a leader but finds the strength to lead the fight against the management for equal pay for women. She grows from 'one of the girls' into a strong and passionate campaigner. Alto

**Connie:** Playing age 50s. Shop Steward and one time love of Monty. She has represented the girls for many years. She is passionate and committed but during the show we find out that she is suffering from cancer. She persuades Rita to take over. Solo song - "Same old story" Alto

**Beryl:** Playing age 30 - 40 ish. She is outspoken and coarse, Strong language comes very naturally to her. She has plenty of funny lines so good comic timing is required. Alto

**Sandra:** Playing age 17-20s. She is prepared to use her youth and looks to 'get ahead' in life. Sop, Mezzo-sop, Alto

**Clare:** Playing age 20-40s. She is a bit scatty and not very articulate - until she sings. Has a solo song "Wosname"  
Mezzo-sop

**Cass:** Playing age 30s. Factory worker. Has ambition and factory work is only a stepping-stone to big dreams. Written for a black actress, but doesn't need to be. Sop, Mezzo-sop, Alto

#### Male

**Eddie:** Playing age 30s. Rita's husband and unskilled factory worker. As the man of the house and 'one of the lads', he expects to be looked after by 'the wife'. He tries really hard to

support Rita, by looking after the kids, cooking, cleaning and washing – not very successfully, but he does his best. Solo song 'The Letter' Baritone

**Sid & Bill:** Playing age 40 – 50s. They are Union Shop Stewards and a bit of a comedy duo. Both reflect the attitudes of the time by being sexist and complacent. Tenor, Baritone, Bass

**Barry:** Playing age 17-20. Apprentice toolmaker. He is naïve and easily embarrassed and therefore is mercilessly teased by the women. Tenor, Baritone, Bass

**Stan:** Playing age 20s – 30s. Eddie's mate and unskilled factory worker.

**Monty:** Playing age 50 - 60ish. Union Convener who represents and fights for the women. Good character role. Tenor, Baritone, Bass

## **Other roles**

### **The Government**

#### **Female**

**Barbara Castle:** Aged 50. She is Minister of Transport in Harold Wilson's Labour Government. Good character part. Born in Chesterfield and MP for Blackburn. She is a strong, straight talking woman in a man's world. Good character role. Solo songs "Busy woman" and "Ideal World" Mezzo -Sop

#### **Male**

**Harold Wilson:** Aged 52. Labour Prime Minister, born in Huddersfield. Good character role with distinctive voice. Solo song "Always a problem" Baritone

**3 Civil Servants:** Playing age 30 ish. Aides to the PM. Good character roles. Need some dancing ability. They sing “Always a problem” with the Prime Minister. Could be either male or female.

## **Management**

### **Male**

**Mr Hopkins:** Playing age 40 – 50ish. He is the Managing Director of Ford Dagenham. Well dressed, well paid and well pleased with himself. Educated and articulate. Tenor, Baritone, Bass

**Ron Macer:** Playing age 40s – 50s. Production Manager, but has come up from the ranks. Can be doubled with Mr Buckton - teacher. Tenor, Baritone, Bass

**Greg Hubble:** Playing age 40s – 50s. Personnel Director – full of ‘personnel-speak’ can be doubled with Chubby Chuff. Tenor, Baritone, Bass

**Mr Tooley:** Playing age 50s. He is Ford’s US Executive. American, loud and full of his own importance. A strong character role. Solo song “This is America”. Can be doubled with Civil Servant. If so, needs to have some dance /movement ability. Baritone

### **Female**

**Lisa Hopkins:** Playing age 35 – 45. Trophy wife of the MD. University educated and “unfulfilled”. Supports Rita and the women. Needs to be well spoken and elegant. Sop, Mezzo-sop, Alto

**Male and female ensembles:** Strong singing and versatile acting required. The show also requires dancers and those with some dancing experience. Plenty of doubling up and character work to do.

**Other Characters/Doubled roles:**

**Graham O'Grady:** Playing age 11ish. He's won a scholarship to a "posh school" He has some solo singing lines.

**Sharon O' Grady:** Playing age 6. Wants to be a doctor - expected to be a nurse.

**Cortina Man:** Playing age 25ish. Model and singer. Hired to do a sexy, ad for the new Cortina. Needs to be a strong singer and 'cheesy' actor who can dance. Solo song "Cortina".

**Mr Buckton:** Playing age 30+ Teacher who believes in corporal punishment for 'recalcitrant' boys. He comes across as smug and intimidating.

**Chubby Chuff:** Playing age 50s ish. Club comedian in the style of Bernard Manning. Mother in law and anti women jokes are his stock in trade.

**Club singer:** Male, playing age 40's ish. He is not good!

**Adams:** "Heavy" who protects the US Ford Executive.

**Press reporters and photographers, factory workers etc.** All ages