

Dick Whittington



CORN EXCHANGE  NEWBURY

Pantomime 2024

Social Story

This is a visual resource for anyone who may benefit from it.

It will introduce you to the characters and the overall story of the show. It will also explain a bit about how pantomime works and what to do when you come.

If it is easier, please print the pages that are most relevant to you.

We can send you this Social Story as a Word Document so you can personalise it if you wish.

Please email getinvolved@cornexchangenew.co.uk for more information.

We look forward to welcoming you to the
Corn Exchange!

Let's meet the characters in the pantomime!

This is **Detective Fairy Bowbells**.



She is a real go-getter and has had quite the career in law enforcement. She is excited for an early retirement BUT she's just been asked to help with one final job...

This is **Dick Whittington**.

He's geeky and awkward, and he loves telling everyone how brilliant Newbury is! In fact, it's his job as Travel and Tourism Ambassador for Newbury Town Council.



Did we mention he can breakdance?!

This is **Percy Rat**.

He is Lord Mayor of London Town and only cares about making money. He's determined to take over all of London Town with his evil rat army.



He's the bad guy in this pantomime so you can shout "BOO" at him if you want to.

This is the **Cosmo**.

She is Dick Whittington's cat and only friend.



Detective Fairy Bowbells transforms Cosmo into a human to help stop Percy Rat. There's just one problem – Cosmo is a nervous, lazy, complaining cat who just wants a cup of tea.

This is **Dame Jolene Malone**.

She is Dick's mother. She has worked behind the perfume counter at Camp Hopson since 1921. She's off to visit her son in London, but she's also on the lookout for a special someone.



It is a pantomime tradition for this character to be played by a man in drag, which means he is dressed as a woman.

Finally, this is **Alice** and **Alderman Fitzwarren**.

This father-daughter duo is trying to keep Percy Rat and his rat army from taking over their shop *Mamma's Emporium*, purveyors of the finest perfumes in London.



Fitzwarren is a bit eccentric, but Alice is determined to save their shop in honour of her late mother. Alice also has an amazing voice and dreams of becoming a pop star.

Notices about the performance:

There will be special effects including flashing lights and haze.

Some of the actors will come into the audience area during the show. For example:

- Near the beginning, Dick will climb from the Balcony to the Stalls on the righthand side.
- At the start of the second act, Percy Rat will start from the music pit and will squirt water into the audience (primarily the front row).

If you are worried about any of these elements or have further questions, please ask a member of the Front of House team or call the box office before the show on 01635 522733.

Without further ado, let's start the story!

(It's a bit different from the usual *Dick Whittington* story you may know...)

First, we meet Detective Fairy Bowbells. She's just about to retire from the Metropolitan Fairy Police Service when she gets a call from the Commissioner.



She finds out that London has been over-run by Percy Rat's evil rat army and there's only one person who can stop him – Dick Whittington!

For her final job before retiring, Fairy Bowbells now has to find Dick before Percy Rat can spread his empire all the way to Newburyshire.

Next, we meet Dick Whittington. He's off to London Town to tell everyone how brilliant Newbury is!



But when he arrives, Dick realises that London is actually pretty scary and overrun with rats.

Speaking of rats, we then meet Percy Rat. He tells us all about his plans to take over London and beyond. He only has one final building to seize – *Mamma's Emporium.*



Back with Dick, we meet his cat Cosmo who has been turned into a human by Fairy Bowbells.



Hopefully she'll be able to help stop the rats – if she ever manages to get a cup of tea.

Next, we meet Dick's mum Dame Jolene Malone. She's come to London to find her son (and maybe a handsome fellow along the way).



Transported to *Mamma's Emporium*, Dick and Cosmo meet Alice and her father. The Fitzwarrens need to save their perfume business but can't seem to make anything that smells good.



Luckily, Jolene Malone turns up and offers to help concoct the ultimate scent. The only thing they're missing is the perfect exotic ingredient and they plan to find it on the Island of Wight!

Later that night, Percy Rat breaks into the emporium and frames Dick for stealing the Fitzwarrens' money.



Alice and Fitzwarren are angry with Dick and kick him out along with Cosmo and his mother Jolene.

On their way back to Newbury, Dick, Cosmo, and Jolene Malone get magically sent back in time so they can catch the ferry to the Island of Wight and rejoin Alice and Fitzwarren.



Now that all are reunited, Fairy Bowbells explains that Percy Rat was the one who planted the money in Dick's backpack. BUT before they can continue on their journey, Percy Rat turns up and sinks the ferry!

After an underwater adventure, they all wash up on the island of Ibiza. There they find the exotic fruit they've been searching for – the Grooveberry. It smells of whatever you want!



Dick also encourages Alice to play her music for DJ Panto. He loves it and puts her in touch with his producer friend.

But Percy Rat turns up again! It's the final battle and Cosmo has finally had her cup of tea; she's ready to take him on with the help of peppermint and eucalyptus – Percy's kryptonite!



Percy Rat is defeated, and he agrees to leave *Mamma's Emporium* alone. In fact, he decides to give up his position as Mayor of London and appoints Dick Whittington!

Back in London, Dick is settling into his role as Mayor, Jolene is creating new delicious scents for the Emporium (and has even found herself a man – Fitzwarren!), and Percy Rat is helping out with the finances.

And finally, Alice is set to become the world's next big pop star, and what better place for her UK exclusive concert than the Corn Exchange!



Now it's time to party!

The End.

Throughout the show, the cast may ask for audience participation. You can join in if you want to, but it's not mandatory.

For example, shortly before the end Dick and Cosmo will read out 'hellos' and birthday wishes before splitting the audience for a song.



And for the final song of the show, the cast on stage may ask for your help. Again, you can choose whether you want to join in or not.

At the end, everybody will clap and the actors will bow.

Sometimes people stamp their feet to say 'thank you' to the actors. The actors may also make a little speech.



Finally, everybody will stand up and you can leave.

We hope you enjoy the show!