

# PARTY IN THE PARK

Saturday – 6 July 2019 – 2-5 pm  
De Beauvoir Square



## Free entertainment for children and fun for adults too

Bouncy castle, magician, face painting, storytelling, bracelet making, Hackney Play Streets, flower crown making, Police (plus horses hopefully), Fire Brigade (if not on a call), Falafel stall, cakes and tea from the WI, Pimms, beer and ice cream. Music from the De Beauvoir Community Flute Choir and Michael Keelan on accordion. The very popular toy giveaway. Raffle and Tombola and more!

# Dear readers

**The poster on page 1 and the article on pages 4 and 5 say it all. Preparations for your 2019 Party in the Park are well underway and we'd love to see you there.**

The main organiser this year is the indomitable Kate McFarlane, who seems to find time to focus on the party despite also being in the throes of building an extension to her house. I'd love to know where she gets her energy.

But as Kate explains on page 5 (and the WI on page 8), we need help with this massive event, both on the day and beforehand. There are loads of jobs, some big, some small, but all essential to the party's success. Remember, too, that volunteering helps transform lives, so if you've been meaning to do volunteer work for a while, this is your chance to dip a toe in the water.

I'd also like to blow the DBA trumpet about our tabletop

# Around the town

## The De Beauvoir WI

We meet from 7:30 to 9:30pm on the first Thursday of the month in the Crypt at St Peter's Church, N1 4DA. We offer a safe space, where women of all ages are welcome. Meetings are free for members, £5 if you come as a guest. Tea, coffee and cake are included, and wine is available for a suggested donation. Follow us at: [www.debeauvoirwi.com](http://www.debeauvoirwi.com)  
Twitter@debeauvoirwi  
Facebook@debeauvoir wi  
Instagram@debeauvoirwi

## De Beauvoir Gardeners

We usually meet on the first Tuesday of the month in the St Peter's Church Crypt Café. Annual membership is £20 for an individual; £30 for a couple at the same address; £15 individual concession rate for over 60s; £20 couple concession rate; £10 for individuals living on benefit or exclusively on a state pension.

**15 September, 1:30–5pm: The Flower and Produce Show (see page 8)**

Follow us at <https://debeauvoirgardeners.wordpress.com>

sale on 24 March that made a healthy profit of £676 with, once again, Kate McFarlane as lead organiser. I had a stall and really enjoyed the camaraderie of the day and the delicious refreshments that were on sale.

When the last newsletter was going to press, I was in the throes of 'welcoming' the Gangs of London film crew into my house for one day's filming. There have since been two more days and they'll have filmed for a further day by the time you read this.

Most of my neighbours have willingly put up with the few days' loss of parking (and the children next door loved the crane!) but I know there have been some complaints. I can only hope that the £500 donated to the DBA so far by the film company will help to sugar the pill. Donations like that come once in a lifetime and help enormously with our work for the local community.

**Hilary Mandleberg**

## The Rosemary Branch Theatre

**13 June, 8.30pm: Naomi McDonald: Copycat (£8)**  
Adele croons over custard creams, Nigella Lawson defrosts meals in her bathtub and Melania Trump hits the bottle hard. As heard on BBC Radio 2's Celebrity Lip Service, impressionist, comedian and singer Naomi brings her exceptionally entertaining new show to the Rosie.

**28 June, 7pm: Kure Kure / Faraway (£13)**  
A multi-media theatre show filled with traditional and modern music from Zimbabwe. The many-talented Anna Mudeka takes audiences on an exhilarating journey through migration, atavism and DNA.

**3 July, 7.30pm: Gobby (£8)**  
Five parties. One big mouth. A biting and heartfelt odyssey about what it really means to be loud. Gobby is a darkly comic telling of survival, and a lesson in how to throw a really good party. Written and performed by Jodie Irvine (Soho, Second City), directed by Serafina Cusack (Soho, Royal Court, Theatre 503).

Full programme and tickets on sale at [www.rosemarybranch.co.uk](http://www.rosemarybranch.co.uk)

# Nature trail

## Peregrine falcons



Photo of a peregrine falcon courtesy of Daniel Rosen

Sharp-eared residents of de Beauvoir were bemused when they thought they heard the distinctive cry of a peregrine falcon one evening. But then a pair was sighted in the skies above and soon began making regular appearances around the De Beauvoir Estate. Keen birders think they may be nesting on top of one of the tower blocks, where there are some suitably secluded spots and a plentiful supply of pigeons for feeding growing chicks. Wildlife enthusiasts have also noticed cormorants on the canal, bats at twilight and the odd terrapin or three in the Kingsland Basin.

## De Beauvoir swifts: 2019 update

Swifts were first seen overhead in De Beauvoir on 1 May, when warm southerly winds wafted a few early arrivals in our direction. Cold unsettled weather put a brake on migration for a few days until the week of 8 May, since when, numbers have steadily increased as the temperatures have risen. Our swifts are only slightly behind schedule.

The 1–3 year-old juvenile birds arrive later than the adults, so we can expect to see the numbers rise further as June approaches. The nestboxes in St Peter De Beauvoir attracted a lot of intense attention from the swifts last summer, so we're hoping for confirmed nesting this summer. In addition to the nestboxes at St Peter's, there are now over 30 swift nestboxes in

De Beauvoir, installed by residents and by the Benyon Estate. We believe this to be the most of any ward in Hackney.

Edward Benyon has commented, 'We're proud to have a healthy population of swifts in De Beauvoir, and the Benyon Estate has been doing what it can to protect the future of this population. We've included integrated internal nestboxes where possible in our refurbishments, and we're also providing external nestboxes in several locations, including the current office refurbishment on De Beauvoir Road and the new-build development for Hackney New Primary School. We hope to keep swifts as part of the sights and sounds of summer in De Beauvoir for many years to come.'



A swift nestbox on The Scolt Head pub

## Socialising at St Peter De Beauvoir



**Souper Tuesday:** Come along to the Cafe in the Crypt on Tuesdays, 12 till 2 for Souper Tuesday. Here you can enjoy a lunch of freshly made vegetarian soup and sourdough bread along with other refreshments. Your lunch will be entirely free or only the cost of a small donation.

**Open Crypt:** Refreshments are available on Wednesdays from 10 till 4. Anyone is welcome to come in and chat, relax quietly, meet others or maybe organise an activity for people to share. Do drop in. There's free WiFi.



# The Party is back



The gardens at the centre of De Beauvoir Square really come alive when the Party in the Park is in full swing

***We're delighted to announce that the renowned Party in the Park will be up and running for its fifteenth year in De Beauvoir Square on Saturday 6 July, 2–5pm (see the poster on page 1).***

Everyone is welcome, especially children – who must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Entry is free and all the children's activities are free, too, so families can enjoy themselves without breaking the bank.

This year our musical treat comes from local group, The De Beauvoir Flute Choir, consisting of ten flautists who have been rehearsing madly over the last few months for this, their first gig. Alongside them (but not at the same time), there will be 'French cafe music' from Jane and Michael Keelan on flute and accordion respectively. Close

your eyes and you'll be transported to Paris.

For the children, we have the usual bouncy castle and the fantastically entertaining magician, Chris Nicholson, is back, too.

Also back are Lucia Jaffer's group of Mush Arts Face Painters. Lucia was brought up in Mortimer Road, so the Party in the Park has special meaning for her. Get ready to see your child transformed into a wild animal (which many parents think their children are already), a post-apocalyptic monster or a butterfly.

New to the Party in the Park this year is Hackney Play Streets. Expect hopscotch and chalk artwork in the central area of the gardens.

If crafts are your child's thing, they can enjoy creating a

flower crown and making a bracelet, then they can take these easy-to-make items home with them.

And if they need some chill time, send them to Kathryn Lowrie and De Beauvoir School's lovely quiet storytelling corner.

The Geffrye Museum will also be popping along to do some lovely activities with the children and to tell us about their reopening in spring next year and about other events they are putting on.

One of the Party's highlights is always the book and toy stall, where we give a free toy and book to every child, subject to availability. We collect these from families in the area whose children have grown out of them and we redistribute them, creating a virtuous circle that we're really proud of.

For the grownups there's the very popular Pimms stall, tea and cakes deliciously provided by the De Beauvoir WI, plus savoury food from vegetarian food stall El Tel's Fine Falafel, who came along last year.

We will also be selling local beers, soft drinks and ice creams.

Attending the event for our safety (though we know that they also come along because they have a really good time) are our great local bobbies – Chris Halfhide and Mo Gani of the De Beauvoir Safer Neighbourhood Team. If we're lucky, the police horses will be with us again, if they're not otherwise engaged. So bring some extra-strong mints with you (the horses love them).

Still on the safety front, there's the Fire Brigade accompanied by their ever-popular fire engine. We missed seeing them last year when they were called away. Let's hope that won't happen again this year.

And, as always, there will be great raffle prizes just waiting to be snapped up, along with hundreds of items to be won in our very affordable tombola.

As in previous years, we wish to thank the Benyon Estate for their generosity in sponsoring the event. Without their support, we'd struggle to put on so many amazing activities for the many children who live in De Beauvoir and the surrounding area.

We look forward to seeing you there and having a great fun community afternoon.

***Help needed! The Party in the Park doesn't happen by chance. Our team has been working on the planning for several months but we need your help.***

Firstly, we would like second-hand children's books and toys for the children's giveaway. Books must be in good condition and toys (no soft toys please), games and puzzles must be complete, clean and in working order. Anything you can give us will be much appreciated. Please phone 07989 849596 so we can arrange collection or drop off at 100 Downham Road (donation box at the back of the driveway if nobody is in).

This year, for the first time, we're also having a second-hand children's clothes stall (for ages 0–10), so if you have any clothes to donate (again, clean and in good condition), please drop off as above.

Oh ... and lest I forget ... tombola prizes are more than welcome, too. We need things like bars of soap, bits of jewellery, mugs, homemade jam, vases and any unwanted Christmas or birthday presents. The more the merrier. Again, you can drop your donations off at 100 Downham Road.

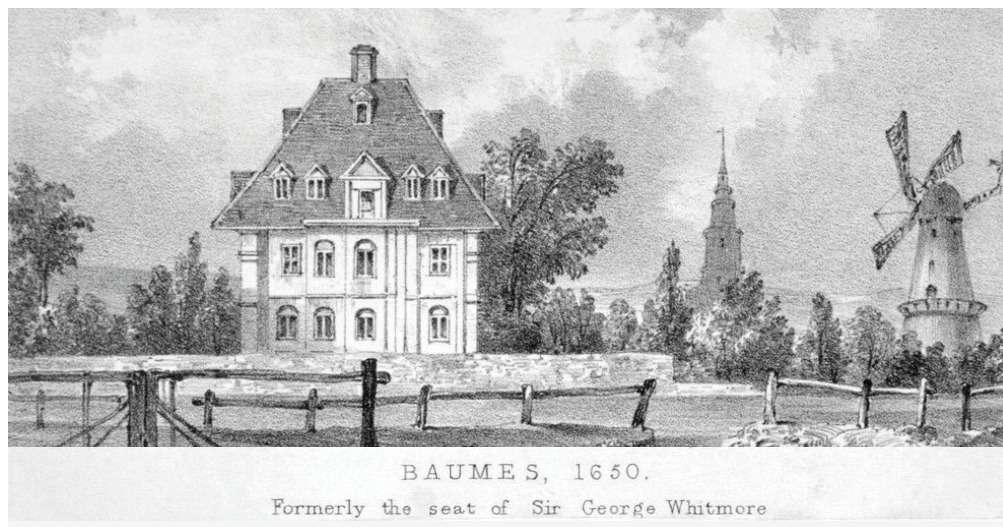
And last but not least, we're looking for volunteers to help on the day. Ideally, we'd like a team of people who are strong enough to set up and take down the gazebos and move tables and chairs. They'll be needed for an hour before we start and at the end. But even if you can only help for one of those slots, we'd really appreciate it. And we'd also love to have some volunteers to organise queuing/ticket systems for the bouncy castle and the face painting, and helpers for the Pimms stall and for the book/toy giveaway.

If none of the above appeals to you, we have plenty of other jobs we need help with, too. So don't be shy. Please put yourself forward.

**Drop an email to: [PartyintheParkDBA@gmail.com](mailto:PartyintheParkDBA@gmail.com) and let us know if there's anything in particular you'd like to help us with.**



# De Beauvoir and the 'Barmy House'



A print of 1842 showing Baumes House in 1650, with a windmill and Shoreditch Church in the background

***If you'd gone to a music hall in 1910, perhaps even Hoxton Hall, you might have heard Harry Champion sing 'Ginger, you're barmy', Ginger being a man who walked about without his 'cady' (hat) on. The song continues, 'If you want to be a don, you want a bit of something on to take off to a lady'. Well, the days of every gent wearing a hat have long gone, but the word 'barmy' is still in use. Local resident Tom Andrews got curious about the history of De Beauvoir and was surprised to find that 'barmy' may have had its origins not a stone's throw from where you live.***

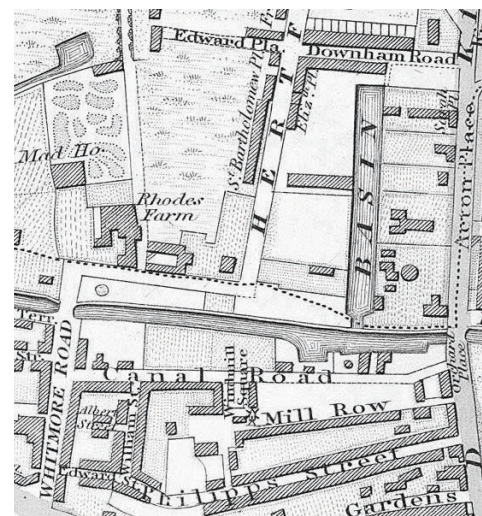
Cutting through the 1970s built De Beauvoir Estate is Balmes Road, named after Balmes House. From the 1300s (in 1305 there was already a house and windmill on the land) to 1852, this great mansion, in its various incarnations, stood close to what is now De Beauvoir Road, just north of the Whitmore Road bridge.

Balmes House was part of the Balmes estate, a large country landholding set among open pasture land. Some sources say the name Balmes comes from Adam Bamme, Mayor of London (d. 1397). Others say it's named after brothers, Spanish merchants, who built the original great house. Yet a third theory is that it relates to the original family being Lords of Baumes. In any case, the estate was rented to William Whitmore, a London haberdasher, prior to 1593 and was bought by his son Sir William Whitmore for a younger son, Sir George Whitmore. There may have been a moated house on the site in 1504, but it is likely that a two-storeyed house, with two sets of dormers in a steep roof, was built for Sir George Whitmore around 1635. The house was extensively remodelled, as paintings and drawings show, in the following century. In 1680, the house and lands were bought by Richard de Beauvoir, a wealthy Guernseyman, and in the 1750s, Balmes House was taken over by Dr Meyer Löw Schomberg for use as a private asylum. A map of the area simply labels it 'Mad House'. So now you can see how 'Balmes' may have led to 'barmy'. But what happened to Balmes House?

## Development and destruction

Fast forward to 1821, when, stimulated by the opening

of the Regent's Canal the previous year, developer and brick maker William Rhodes (1774–1843), grandfather of Cecil Rhodes, the now-controversial nineteenth-century imperialist, secured a lease for 150 acres of land from Reverend Peter de Beauvoir. The land he acquired is marked on maps of the era as 'Rhodes Farm'. Here Rhodes planned to build residences for the upper classes in a grid pattern, with four squares on diagonal streets intersecting at an octagon close to today's Scoll Head pub.



Greenwood's 1826 map of London with the 'Mad Ho'

However, work stopped in 1823, when Rhodes was accused of having unfairly obtained his lease from Peter de Beauvoir shortly before De Beauvoir's death. Richard Benyon, De Beauvoir's heir, gained control of the estate only after a lengthy court case that wasn't settled until 1834. Under the Benyons, the scheme was scaled down. Only the south-eastern square was built, as De Beauvoir Square, together with several diagonal streets, which still exist. From here on, it's a fascinating tale that typifies much of Hackney's generational change. Occupied from the 1840s onwards by the newly emerging middle classes, nineteenth-century De Beauvoir was almost wholly residential except around Kingsland Basin and the south-west corner, where a factory was leased from 1823. This still stands. It's the beautiful Thomas Briggs building on Southgate Road,

where Thomas Briggs made tents for the army at the height of the British Empire.

The Benyon family developed the area from the late 1830s onwards and the family estate still owns some 300 properties in De Beauvoir. Many of the blocks on the De Beauvoir Estate bear Channel Island names in honour of the De Beauvoir family's Guernsey origins. In the end, Balmes House was simply in the way. De Beauvoir Road was extended south to meet the Whitmore Road bridge and Balmes House was demolished, in about 1852. Today's 1–11 De Beauvoir Road stand on the site. Later in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many of the canalside industrial buildings became part of the furniture-making industry that stretched from De Beauvoir to Shoreditch and beyond into East London. When those industries went into a decline, many beautiful squares and streets in the neighbouring district of Haggerston, such as Nichols Square and Cremer Street, also deteriorated. In 1937, thanks to De Beauvoir's proximity to Kingsland Basin and the canal, the south-east corner, between Downham Road and Hertford Road, was re-zoned for industrial use. After the war, it fell into a steady decline and became semi-derelict until 2007, when redevelopment led to the creation of residential and commercial space.

Meanwhile, in the 1960s, great swathes of Victorian developments and history were swept away, including most of the housing south of Downham Road, which was cleared to make way for the De Beauvoir Estate, built in 1971. In the same year, the De Beauvoir central conservation area was declared, with the south following in 1977 and the northern area in 1998. Thus, De Beauvoir Town has gone from hunting grounds and pretty villages to impressive Victorian residential development and industry, through twentieth-century decay, redevelopment as social housing and now conservation and more development. But through all this change, the memory of Balmes House lingers on.

Editor's note: I doubt that 'barmy' originated from the Balmes House asylum of the 1750s. According to my Oxford English Dictionary, in 'The Return from Parnassus', one of the Parnassus plays – satiric comedies dating from between 1598 and 1602 and performed as part of the Christmas festivities of St John's College, Cambridge – there is the phrase 'Such barmy heads wil alwaies be working'. But why let a date anomaly spoil the fun?



# WI baking plea



***'Those who are bakers always tend to be nice people, just because they want to give to other people.'* (Kim Joy from The Great British Bake Off, 2018)**

We at the De Beauvoir Women's Institute are excited that the DBA has again invited us to run the ever-popular tea and cake stall at the 2019 Party In The Park. We've all got our pinnies and mixing bowls at the ready to provide wondrous cakes and bakes to the appreciative visitors to the Party in the Park on 6 July, but to make our stall the best it's ever been, we're looking for some extra bakers who'd be willing to give us a hand. Whether your specialities are bundt cakes, biscuits or buns, millionaire's shortbread or Malteser cake, a red velvet or a lemon drizzle, do get in touch at [debeauvoirbakes@gmail.com](mailto:debeauvoirbakes@gmail.com) and help to make the tea and cake stall one of the event's go-to destinations. It's your chance to channel your inner Great British Bake Off contestant self.

After all, according to Julia Child, the American chef of the 1970s and 1980s, who introduced a generation of Americans and British to French cooking, 'a party without cake is just a meeting'. And no one wants the Party in the Park to feel like a meeting, do they? We're waiting by our inbox to hear from you. So please do get in touch via [debeauvoirbakes@gmail.com](mailto:debeauvoirbakes@gmail.com)

**De Beauvoir Gardeners**  
present the 2019

Full entry details online  
[www.debeauvoirgardeners.org.uk](http://www.debeauvoirgardeners.org.uk)

TEAS & CAKE / PLANT STALL &  
GARDENING ADVICE / WI STALL  
TOMBOLA / PRE-LOVED HOUSE &  
GARDEN STALL / ICE CREAM / HONEY /  
ZAYTOUN / THE HEALTHY BACK BAG /  
ZEB SOANES' 'GASPARD THE FOX' /  
CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES /  
GREENER PLANET WILDLIFE &  
ENVIRONMENT STALLS /  
DOG PORTRAITS / PRIZE GIVING /  
CHARITY RAFFLE

We are a friendly gardening club for anyone in Hackney or Islington – whether you have a window box, a balcony, an allotment or a garden. Membership details and our programme of speakers are online – guest fee £4. See also page 2.



# Friday cafe



***Pass by St Peter's Church on a Friday lunchtime and you'll notice bunting over the gate and a tempting printed menu underneath. Cec Darker explains.***

Inside the crypt, you'll be warmly greeted by local volunteers. These lovely people take it in turns to cook and serve delicious homemade affordable food (provided free or for a small donation to people who don't have the means to pay) from 12.00 noon until about 2.30pm – unless it runs out, which it frequently does as it's so popular. There's nearly always soup at (currently) £2.50 – usually vegan but sometimes ham and pea or granny's chicken broth. The two main courses on offer, each for only a fiver, give you a choice of a veggie or non-veggie meal, and both are served with plenty of sides of veg. Depending on who's cooking that week, you could find Palestinian, Ethiopian, South-East Asian, Brazilian, Chinese, Syrian or Mediterranean-inspired food, or good old British classics like shepherd's pie or bangers and mash. This year we celebrated

Burns Night with Cullen Skink, tatties and neeps, and Cranachan – and there may even have been a wee dram to go with it.

Desserts at £2.50 of the yummy, creamy, fruity variety vie for popularity with rib-sticking crumbles, proper puddings and our legendary cakes, which are equal to anything you've seen on The Great British Bake Off. If you don't have room left for a pud, you can always take away a guilty pleasure or two to eat later at home. Coffee and tea are available for only 50p and for a donation, you can also enjoy a glass of wine with your meal. Diners are as varied as the menus, from mums with young babies to some of our most senior citizens. Local resident Hilary says, 'For my mum Mary (95), who's living with dementia, having a regular social occasion is vitally important to her happiness and wellbeing. Mum loves chatting to friends and seeing local familiar faces.'



To top it all, free WiFi and a charming paved outdoor space in summer make it a popular place for lunch-hour relaxing with friends and colleagues, business networking, family meetings and gossip catch-ups of all shapes and sizes. If you'd like to join our team serving food, washing up or helping with cooking, please email: [debeauvoir.communitycafe@gmail.com](mailto:debeauvoir.communitycafe@gmail.com). No experience is necessary; we can support you if you'd like to have a go. Cooks are welcome to claim for their expenses and all profits go to local charities. Over the past two years, we've given away nearly £7000.

The last cafe this session will be 19 July and we'll reopen in September.



# A Modern Regency makeover



Interior and furniture design by Faten M

***The very creative Faten M has been designing this newsletter and several posters for the De Beauvoir Association over the last few years. As she was expecting a baby – and has now got a lovely little boy – I thought she might like to meet Bex Colls, a DBA committee member who was also pregnant. And then I thought, what if Bex were to interview Faten for us? Here's the result.***

Faten M is an interior designer, who works out of a small studio in De Beauvoir. For the past two years, she's been renovating a house on Englefield Road. This road was built by the late 1830s and was named after Englefield House in Berkshire, which has been owned by the Benyon family since the mid-eighteenth century. In William Rhodes's original 1821 plans for the area, Englefield Road was going to be the site of the central octagon (Benyon Octagon), where the radiating streets of the estate were to meet. This grand plan never took shape, but Englefield Road does have some of the 'bookend' terraces that are particularly distinctive to the De Beauvoir estate. One such 'bookend' is Faten's home.

She and her husband bought the house in 2017 from a recently retired couple who had lived there since the 1970s. The house had been well lived in and over the years, several DIY projects had been undertaken, which were a bit, well, quirky.

It's fair to say the house needed a new approach, or as Faten explained to me, 'We took it over at the end of its journey with one family; we wanted to start a new story there for ourselves and our family.' The results clearly show that she had a strong vision for the house from the outset. She has completely reinterpreted the interior in a style she calls 'Modern Regency'. But there's something more she brings to it and that comes from her Pakistani heritage and her upbringing in Dubai. She thinks about each room as a social space that flows into the next. Faten recalls that her family home was full of seating areas where the family could gather and hang out, and it's this spirit of sociability that she's managed to maintain in her new home.

She also places emphasis on raw wood and natural materials, and she has a love of statement plants, which look great in her high-ceilinged Georgian rooms. Then there is a touch of 'Dubai bling', as she puts it. It gives a real sense of glamour and modernity to the space. Put it

this way, the interiors are not at all what you'd expect from the outside. The living room is an example of how Faten has been prepared to step away from tradition. Not just content with knocking down the partition wall between the hall and the living room, she's also changed the angle of the staircase so the staircase itself makes an 'entrance' into the room. She's also decided to have the main door to the house at basement level; that way the traditional 'front door' area doesn't end up being a space full of coats and shoes.

The result, in terms of the interior space, is a light, bright, more squared-off living room. Chunky chimney breasts have been removed or disguised, and apart from the window shutters, the room, and in fact the overall feel of the house, does not hark back to a past idea of how to live, but instead looks forward to a fresh, modern one.



Faten's carpentry and mural painting for the office

Not content with simply buying furniture in, Faten designs her own, beautifully inlaid with mother-of-pearl. She had it made in India and shipped over.

And she also makes her own furniture. Once you know her, you'll see that she tries her hand at anything and everything, even while pregnant! As she says, understanding how things are constructed makes dealing with builders and handymen that bit easier.

Faten is big on 'compartmentalising' a house, of being



A corner of the master bedroom

unafraid of slightly reducing the size of a room to make its purpose more focussed. Her bedroom is an example of this. The main sleeping area is light and airy but a portion of the room has been spliced off to create a walk-in wardrobe space, and off that, she's created a small but perfectly formed office. So, rather than having everything on view in one large room, she's given each smaller space its own function. The effect is to make the overall effect much more peaceful.

This magical and original house isn't 'finished' but though I'm a complete novice when it comes to interior design, even I can appreciate how Faten's creativity blended with her practical sense of design – honed through her background in graphic design – has brought so much to what was once a rather ordinary house. It's now radically different from how she found it, and I'd bet my bottom dollar that it's not like any other on the street.

**If you'd like to consult Faten about home styling or about reconfiguring the interior of your home, or if you'd like to shop for some of her furniture, visit [www.londonfatcat.com](http://www.londonfatcat.com). View her Instagram profile on @londonfatcat**



# 10 things... ---



***Avril Broadley interviewed local dog walker Alex for your last newsletter. This time around, Alex shares the 10 things you need to know for finding a dog walker to suit you and your pooch.***

**1. Make a list of what you need** This depends on your routine and working day. For instance, do you want your pooch to be looked after for the whole day or do you just need a midday walk? Will you need regular help or do you need flexibility?

**2. Word-of-mouth is a good place to start.** Ask fellow dog owners for recommendations and even talk to walkers when you come across them – many will be happy to recommend other walkers when their own books are full.

**3. Check their experience.** How long have they been working with dogs and can they provide references?

**4. How many dogs do they walk at a time?** Insurance only covers a walker for up to six dogs but some parks have a limit of four. Think about how happy your dog is with other dogs and what the ideal number would be.

**5. How about the doggy transport?** If dogs are picked up in a van, are the crates secure? How many dogs to a crate? Is the bedding regularly cleaned and dry? Is there air conditioning for summer and heating for the winter?

**6. Is this dog walker correctly insured?** Dog walkers are legally required to have public liability insurance when walking dogs in parks. Check that yours has this.

**7. What happens if your pooch is injured?** Does the walker have any first aid training for pets?

**8. Ask for a practice walk.** This will help to establish a relationship between the walker and your dog, and the walker will be able to see any potential problems before having to deal with them on their own.

**9. Ensure a good match.** Check that the walker offers the right type of walks for your dog and understands how they play, as well as their routine, health, diet and behaviour.

**10. Be honest.** If your dog has any behaviour issues, be up front. The walker will find out soon enough.

**For more information contact Alex:**  
**[debeauvoirpack@gmail.com](mailto:debeauvoirpack@gmail.com)**