



# All hail, Vale's Nails!

On Saturday 6 June the ladies of Vale's Nails nail bar hosted a pop-up at Strawberry Vale, N2, providing free manicures and nail art for local Peabody residents in the sunshine.

London charity ART AGAINST KNIVES runs Vale's Nails from 10 Grand Arcade in North Finchley every Monday from 4pm-6.30pm. It is open to females of all ages, offering free manicures, training and a safe space in which to socialise.

The weekly project provides a chance to learn about professional nail care, design nail art and run pop-up nail bar events. These are an opportunity to positively engage with local females, gain practical transferable skills and develop the social enterprise model which the nail bar is working towards. Aside from creating amazing nails, it also provides one-on-one mentoring, support with personal issues, housing concerns, homework, CVs, and access routes into education, employment, and training.

As one attendee called Kelly-Anne puts it: "We need to keep Vales Nails, it's really important because young girls like me can easily access the qualification and support here...there is nothing else around here, now that I'm not at school or college I don't know what to do."



Barnet Mayor, Councillor Mark Shooter and the Lady Mayoress, Melissa Shooter at the Long Lane Pasture garden party. Photo Neil McNaughton

## Pasture goes under cover

By Neil McNaughton

Tucked away on the N2-N3 border where Long Lane, the North Circular Road and the Northern Line converge, in one of the borough's busiest corners, Long Lane pasture provides a welcome oasis for nature lovers, walkers and anyone who wants to get away from it all without having to travel too far. This open space has been here since 1912, but is so secluded that many local residents are not aware of its existence.

On Sunday 14 June, members of the Pasture's 'Friends' group, volunteers and well-wishers gathered for a garden party to celebrate the construction of a new wooden gazebo and fencing made possible by a £5,000 grant from Barnet's area grant scheme.

Former Barnet Mayor Brian Coleman, who was instrumental in obtaining the Pasture Trust's 25-year lease in 2009, was joined by current Mayor Councillor Mark Shooter and Lady Mayoress Melissa Shooter at the event.

Local resident and custodian of the pasture Wayne Armsby proudly showed off the tree planting programme, designed to mask off noise from the North Circular, as well as the beehives, water features and protected nature reserves, all made possible by a small army of local volunteers.

The new shelter will also be home to a collection of illustrations showing visitors what can

be seen in its two and half acres of unspoilt landscape, including butterflies, birds, many species of trees, wild flowers and pond life.

The pasture also regularly sees working visits from groups of young offenders, Duke of Edinburgh award students and local school pupils. It is also planned to use the new shelter

for talks, working lunches and planning meetings, especially important given the uncertainty of the British climate!

For information visit the website, [www.longlanepasture.org](http://www.longlanepasture.org) and follow on Twitter @LLPasture.

## RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

### Mind the gap

School's out or uni's over and it's time to hit the road for that middle class rite of passage that is the gap year. This is the one chance to travel to far off places, meet exotic people and eat unusual food before training to become an accountant.

Back when hippies were hippies and love was largely free no one had a gap year. Some people went to work for charities and dug wells in Africa while trying not to get eaten by lions. Anyone else went travelling and you didn't even need to be rich to do it.

Armed with only a spare T-shirt you set out to find yourself and the rest of the world. You headed for Turkey by Magic Bus, crammed into some battered old heap that had to be pushed up hills and would break down in Yugoslavia. You hitched across Europe until you found somewhere seriously exotic to gaze at the stars.

The main aim was to reach a holy site in the Middle East for some serious contemplation or go further east to India, particularly Goa, so that you could sleep on the beach, smoke mind-expanding substances and come home with a set of bongos and dysentery. If, that is, you got home. Some people's 'gap year' turned into a gap decade.

It didn't matter what you did, it was about rejecting western culture and seeing the world from a different perspective, probably one that was hashish-induced. Soon you were complaining about how the unspoilt beaches of Thailand were being ruined by Aussies looking for somewhere to have a barbie. Oh the innocence of youth, the love of freedom, exploring new cultures and not worrying about whether you could get a signal on your mobile phone. You were in 'Rome' and did as the 'Romans' did. But that was then.

Now the gap year is a rite of passage for middle class kids with smart phones and credit cards. It's not when in Rome, it's welcome to Vegas. Who wants an unspoilt Thai beach when you can have one with beach bars, the latest dance music and a barbie run by a couple of Aussie IT entrepreneurs. And holy sites aren't for meditation any more, they're just the perfect place to strip off and then put the pics on Facechat. Gap year? No, Gap yah.

## Give an hour, take an hour

Barnet Timebank is a growing scheme that lets people share their skills with others. Members have shared hours giving and receiving computer help, DIY, gardening, cooking tips and driving theory test help amongst many other things. Requests have included local lifts, web design and help around the home.

To join up and start giving and receiving time, contact Barnet co-ordinator Lex Karlin on 07887 249910 or email: [barnet@timebanks.co.uk](mailto:barnet@timebanks.co.uk).

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