

FITNESS

Ballet-inspired fitness classes in village home

By **SUSAN KING**

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A former London banker has swapped her stressful city life for a home in Dallington to re-train as an exercise instructor.

Fiona Vestentoft thought she could never be happy away from the Kings Road and everything London has to offer, including the Lotte Berk exercise classes she was hooked on, and the career she had built up over 20 years.

But she came up with idea of re-training as a Lotte Berk instructor and finding a house in the country with room for an exercise studio. Now students are flocking to Fiona's classes which she runs daily at her house and at different locations in the area.

Exercise has always been one of Fiona's passions - her life centred around competitive gymnastics until the age of 16 when she broke both of her arms a year apart. So when she discovered Lotte Berk, which is based on ballet and includes lots of stretching, it filled a void that had been left after giving up gymnastics.

Fiona found in Lotte Berk the grace, fun and figure enhancement that she had only previously found in gymnastics - luckily, she says, Lotte comes without the danger of



PHOTO: PETER CRIPPS

zontal bar.

She said: "I have no regrets. It was a hard decision but, looking back, it was the right thing to do. It was like getting my sight back after years of being a mole going to work in the dark and coming home in the dark - I absolutely I love it!

"The best thing is having clients who really love the classes and helping them to regain their figures and get strong, healthy and flexible.

ach, lift the bottom, tone and shape legs and arms and improve flexibility and posture.

"Lotte Berk is good for everyone of all ages, classes are of mixed ability and people work as hard as they like. The classes are perfect for people with bad backs, as well as pre and post pregnancy, getting fit for skiing - everything really.

"It's different from pilates or yoga. You get effective dance exercises and stretches on top

lates and wonderful stretches like yoga.

"The exercises are set to music and designed to keep you smiling and working long after the muscles feel like giving up. Leg exercises performed at the ballet barre are beneficial, giving all the muscles a good workout."

Stars like Joan Collins, Britt Ekland, Barbra Streisand and Yasmin Le Bon love Lotte Berk. Ring: 01435 830657/