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Any old iron?



'Ere, 'Aroid, there's only rag and bone men back on the streets!

Cries of "any old iron" and a ramshackle horse and cart have not been seen or heard in Tooting for many years.

But one man has given up a high-earning job in the City to take up the mantle from Steptoe and Son and bring the rag and bone trade into the

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21st century.

Jason Mohr, 36, took his high-tech trucks through the streets of Tooting on Monday to pick up unwanted rubbish and junk.

"I was in the City for about eight years, but I had had enough of working crazy hours and never seeing my family," he said.

"I wanted to create something. I got my inspiration from America, where this is quite a big thing.

"This idea is to bring what is essentially quite a scabby industry up-to-date with modern trucks, branding and professionalism," he said.

And though the days when forlorn characters like Albert Steptoe rang a bell to attract attention might be over, a megaphone playing tunes is still used.

"The old days of the horse and cart and bell are over," Mr Mohr said.

"The regulatory costs are too high for that, so we have to do it in a different way.

"We still do have the music and the

megaphone though, although we don't do so many on-the-spot clearances as rag-and-bone men used to."

Nowadays, the company, Any Junk?, collects unwanted junk from businesses and houses alike for a charge.

Some of it is recycled or sold on, with only the necessary rubbish going to landfill.

In Tooting, a new exercise bike and a dough-making machine were among the more unlikely items recovered on Monday.

This was done free of charge for businesses in the town centre to help spring clean the borough.

And Mr Mohr said the work was not only great fun, but had allowed him to meet people in the community where he lives.

"I live in Northcote Road near Wandsworth Common, but when I



TV favourites: 'Aroid and Albert in the hit comedy, Steptoe and Son.

Picture: © LUK



'A huge amount of fun': Ex-City high-flyer Jason Mohr, founder of Any Junk?

worked in the City I used to leave the house early and come home late at night.

"Since setting up the business, I've had to know far more of the local people and I feel like I'm part of the community," he said.

The modern day rag-and-bone business has been so successful Mr Mohr now plans to extend it to north London and across the country.

"It's been a huge amount of fun for me."