



STRATHBUNGO NEWS

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A Happy New Year from the New Strathbungo Society

For the first time in a long while, Strathbungo starts the new year with an active residents' organisation charged with promoting major improvements in the community.

Some 125 local folk turned out for a Special General Meeting of the newly-reconstituted Strathbungo Society in late November, demonstrating the pulling power of back lane improvements and Neighbourhood Watch – the two issues that provoked most concern on the doorsteps when the Steering Committee canvassed for members earlier in the autumn. Guest speakers were Jim Blair, South Area Manager of Glasgow City Council's Environmental Health Department, and Sergeant Stewart Dunsmuir of Strathclyde Police, Community Involvement Unit.

BACK LANE IMPROVEMENTS

Mr Blair identified the key environmental problems facing Strathbungo as improper disposal of domestic refuse and dog fouling. 'Because of its specific problems to do with refuse and litter in the lanes, we've targeted Strathbungo for a pilot initiative aimed at informing residents of their rights and responsibilities and also warning offenders of the consequences,' he said.

This includes a leaflet, now being prepared in conjunction with the Cleansing Department, for distribution to every household in the spring. The leaflet details regulations for disposal of household rubbish, as well as collection of other domestic items. Coinciding with the leaflet drop, Environmental Health will post signs in the lanes forbidding dumping and warning of stiff fines.

He urged residents to report persistent or flagrant offenders to Environment Health. 'If someone routinely drops his rubbish off at the corner of the lane, for instance, we want to know. Ideally, we would like to have two witnesses to any offence, but we will be happy to visit that person and warn him officially.'

As for unwitnessed dumping, Environmental Health and Cleansing sometimes attempt to identify refuse and then interview the offender. However, he advised the public to resist the temptation to carry out their own private investigations, owing to the danger of discarded sharps or needles, a growing problem everywhere in Britain. Because much of Strathbungo is a conservation area, Environmental Health has liaised with the Planning Department for permission to post signs warning against dog fouling. These will be going up soon on

lamp-posts throughout the district, an irony which will not escape local observers. Signs are directed at owners rather than their pets, and so are the fines for offending dogs.

Even so, he continued, the most effective deterrent for any problem will always be local residents, both in taking responsibility for their own actions and in reporting offenders to the proper authorities. 'Residents have a presence on site, day in and day out, whereas our contact with the area will always be limited by our level of staffing to cover the whole of Glasgow. That's why we welcome your reports of specific problems. The important point is that we must continue the dialogue and work together. These are not just hollow words to please an audience - we mean it.'



**BULK REFUSE
UPLIFT**

0141-227 4484

Neighbourhood Watch

Sergeant Dunsmuir stated that Neighbourhood Watch functions first and foremost a deterrent to crime, as opposed to the Police Department's active role in detecting crime and apprehending suspects. All it requires of residents is that they keep a watchful eye on their neighbours' property, mark their own possessions for easy identity and take simple precautions to safeguard their homes against intruders.

'It is not,' he emphasised, 'an invitation to snoop on the people next door. It's all to do with neighbourliness in the old fashioned sense of the word - just being friendly and social. If you get to know your neighbours - if you know who lives there and know when they're away - you will be more alert to seeing people who shouldn't be there. But in no circumstances are you to take the law into your own hands and try to apprehend an intruder. A simple phone call to the Police can save your neighbours a lot of grief. If it's a false alarm, it's easily dealt with and we don't mind. If it's not a false alarm, your neighbours will thank you - and so will the Police.'

Neighbourhood Watch schemes must be organised and led by the local community, not the Police. 'We will be happy to do everything we can to help you set up and run your own scheme, but the onus is on you. For a scheme to be effective, we will be looking for at least 40% of the residents willing to participate.'

The benefits are documented, he said. 'Statistics show that the rate of crime can fall, sometimes dramatically, in these areas. Just the presence of Neighbourhood Watch signs may persuade would-be housebreakers to pass on by. The concept also encour-

ages concern for your neighbours and this contributes to a better quality of life for everybody. Benefits may even be more tangible - for instance, some insurance companies are interested in whether Neighbourhood Watch schemes are in place.'

Neighbourhood Watch is a big issue, and members agreed that it should run in parallel to the Strathbungo Society, rather than becoming the central focus of the organisation. The Society will distribute information area-wide in late January and provide street-by-street drop off points to facilitate a scheme being set up. Sergeant Dunsmuir said that while he hopes the whole of Strathbungo signs up, smaller schemes can go ahead on a street-by-street basis if the requisite percentage of residents are willing to proceed. [See separate story and attached information on how to participate.]

Members were asked to support the Society during the coming year by volunteering to help with various activities. In addition to back lanes and Neighbourhood Watch, these include planning, local history, local information, social events, fund raising and publicity. Everybody can still get in on the 1995 action by contacting the relevant convenor.



LOOK OUT - it's here!

Even before several alarming attacks brought it home to us over the winter, people in Strathbungo were concerned about crime prevention. Now the case for positive action is clearer than ever.

Enclosed with this newsletter you have the facts about Neighbourhood Watch - and how you can set up a scheme right in your own street.

Neighbourhood Watch is a signal to would-be villains to give Strathbungo a miss. As a community united against crime, we stand the best chance of avoiding not just street violence but also the needless expense and heartbreak of house burglary and vandalism.

The Society urges every resident of the community to read the enclosed information and respond positively to the challenge. Make sure you have your form in by 10th February, dropping it off at the nearest collection point:

- 12 or 24a Moray Place**
- 27 Regent Park Square**
- 38 Queen Square**
- 5 Marywood Square**
- 33 Carswell Gardens**
- 22 Vennard Gardens**
- 40 Thorncliffe Gardens**

It won't work without you - if you don't get involved, who's to blame?

MEET THE NEW STRATHBUNGO SOCIETY

During the summer and autumn of 1994 a steering committee of local residents set about the task of re-forming the lapsed Strathbungo Conservation Society. This included updating the existing constitution and conducting a door-to-door membership drive to gauge grassroots support. Over 300 households signed on the dotted line.

The original Strathbungo Conservation Society was formed in 1971 and, as the name implied, was originally deeply committed to issues related to the listed Victorian terraces. Even so, the Society always played a broader role in the community, seeing Titwood Road as the natural southern boundary to the area as a social unit.

Thus the steering committee felt that rewriting the constitution offered an excellent opportunity to recognise this wider canvas formally, not least by dropping 'Conservation' from the organisation's name. At the SGM, members adopted a new constitution to take the Society forward into its third decade. (Copies available from the Secretary.)

The SGM also elected a Committee of five officers and 12 members to carry out the business and related activities of the Society during the coming year. These are Chairman Alex Connell, 5 Marywood Square; Vice Chairmen John Devitt, 50 Marywood Square, and Mike Greenwood, 29 Moray Place; Secretary Liz Brown, 24 Moray Place; and Treasurer Nigel MacDonald, 33 Queen Square.

Committee members are Brian Biggans, 10 Marywood Square; Kay Caldwell, 44 Queen Square; Mandy Cameron, 35 Queen Square; Tom Kennedy, 32 Moray Place; Mary Lawson, 17 Regent Park Square; Malcom Maddox, 27 Regent Park Square; Morris Moore, 3 Marywood Square; Annet Nottingham, 12 Moray Place; Adrian McCreadie, 33 Carswell Gardens; Douglas Ritchie, 24a Moray Place; Joe Sacharin, 22 Vennard Gardens; and Sharon Schweps, 38 Queen Square.

The Committee met in December to form smaller teams to deal with the various issues facing the Society during 1995. Sub-committees are: Planning, incorporating back lanes, traffic and parking issues – Nigel MacDonald, convenor; Neighbourhood Watch – Mike Greenwood, convenor; Local History – Mary Lawson, convenor; and Publicity, including local information and social events – Sharon Schweps, convenor.

Any resident who has information, ideas and/or *energy* to spare should contact the convenor of the relevant sub-committee.

HOBBLED BY COBBLES?

Hands up, anybody who's never bumped along one of our back lanes without wishing old Mr McAdam had lived nextdoor to the Glorious 'Greek' when Strathbungo was being built! The cobbles are a rich part of our heritage but the current state of them is decidedly poor, according to the Planning Sub-Committee, who reported to the January meeting on problems to do with lanes, parking and traffic.

They have already contacted the City Council for specs on relaying cobbles or tarmac-ing, where planning permits, with a view to getting contractor quotes so that the Society as a whole help homeowners assess the scale of such a project realistically. They also hope to offer individual costs for resurfacing private off-street parking areas. Letters have been sent to the various utilities, inviting them to contribute in light of their penchant for digging up lanes. We await replies with bated breath and meanwhile the Planning team are exploring ways to enlist public or Euro grant support.

They are also consulting with the Police on the feasibility of double yellow lines round corners of the 'squares' to ease access for emergency vehicles.



SEWER POINTS

Work on renewing the main sewers in Queen Square and Marywood Square is due to start in mid-February. Original sewage pipes in both streets will be taken up and replaced after camera inspection revealed that they are in too poor a condition for simple repair work.

Work will require deep excavation in both streets, but this will be carried out so that limited parking facilities can still be maintained. Sewage pipes in Regent Park Square were renewed some time ago.

Strathclyde Regional Council will give notice when work is due to begin, and further information can be had from Mike McGlinchey at the Region's Water/New Works Department on 041-227 6627.

NEW USE . . . or a New Problem?

By now many local residents will have received a 'ghostly' acknowledgement from Glasgow Planning for signing a petition at the SGM objecting to the change of use proposal for a hot food carry-out shop on the site of the former Co-op carpet showroom, 862 Pollokshaws Road. Planning promise a decision 'in due course'.

While the site is just outwith our southern boundary, the Society appreciates the concern of residents in Titwood Road and nearby streets who fear this will bring new and unwanted problems of litter, noise and vandalism such as the 'other end' of the community deals with all too often. It is a fundamental principle of the new Society that all residents of Strathbungo are in

this together, whether the issue is conservation of listed property or preservation of the local environment.

If you wish to join the campaign, contact Sam Wilson of the Shawlands Community Council on 041-632 8312.

It is also hoped that the Planning Department's interest in the well-being of Strathbungo is not as pale as their typewriter ribbon.

COMMENTS PLEASE

This is the first issue of the New Strathbungo News, which we hope to publish quarterly from now on.

We welcome your comments, cherish your support, and will cheerfully print your letters in future issues.

What bothers you about Strathbungo? More to the point, what do you propose to do to make our community healthier, happier and more vibrant? If you can't tell the world, you can at least tell everybody between Titwood and Nithsdale Roads. Start with a note to Sharon Schweps, 38 Queen Square.

NEXT ISSUE

Plans for the AGM in April
plus
THE LAW AND DOGS
Where do you stand?