

S T R A T H B U N G O



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The Strathbungo Society presents
The first-ever

BUNGO Coffee Break

Saturday 15 March
10am - 12 noon

Queens Park Baptist Church
Balvicar Street @ Park Gates



Come & meet your neighbours - help us raise operating funds for future newsletters and Bungo events.

**Home Baking
Books & Other Stalls
Coffee, Tea & Juice**

ANY DONATIONS?

Please bring books (good condition) to 39 Regent Park Square during the week before, home-baking to the hall on the day.

Phone 423 7756 if you wish to run a stall.

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EDITORIAL

do we get the shops we deserve?

HOME IMPROVEMENT SPECIAL

spring into action on the home front

BREAKING THE BANK . . .

the Strathbungo society needs your help

NEWS IN BRIEF

a roundup of local events

As Strathbungo's much-loved wholefood shop closes, what can we learn about keeping existing businesses open and attracting new ones to the area?

EVERGREEN and gone forever

They offered a vast array of wholesome food at keen prices, staff were fun and unstintingly helpful, and they came top of the shops in last year's community survey ... so what caused Evergreen to close down in February?

'It was a combination of things', says Debbie, who with her partners Judith and Miranda, ran the wholefood co-op for 14 years, 'but it was mostly to do with the location.' Ouch, says the Strathbungo Society. What does this mean?

Evergreen was originally further up the road in Pollokshields at 136 Nithsdale Road. 'We started after having a stand at the Garden Festival in 1988. Part of the deal was that the Council had grants to help people start up real businesses afterward.'

They were fine in the first years, but when their landlord decided to renovate, they were given just two weeks' notice to quit. That's when they moved to 18 Nithsdale Road. It cost them £2,000 to bring the new shop up to an acceptable standard and Debbie reckons it cost another £5,000 in lost revenue while people 'found' them after the move. Some never did, but new customers gradually made up for it and they were



Jane, Judith and Debbie

doing well enough until a series of events outwith their control contrived to isolate them further.

'We rely a lot on passing trade and when some of the businesses around us closed, we really felt it. We hoped that other retailers would open up in the street, but instead the shops were mostly used for storage or for service facilities without much street presence.'

And when they thought things couldn't get worse ...

... they did. As part of the Route Action Plan, the Council blocked off the Pollokshaws Road end of Nithsdale Road and created a turning circle there, doing away with about ten parking spaces nearby the shop. Then along came several new businesses with staff who leave their cars parked out front all day. One business accounts for six places all by itself, enjoying free parking and blocking short-term visitors throughout the trading hours.

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Ironically, though Evergreen staff don't drive cars, a lot of their customers do. Just a few spaces with pay-while-you-stay permits would have made a big difference, says Debbie, allowing high turnover parking so people could stop off and get their messages. Cllr Walter MacLellan was sympathetic enough to come out to the shop and talk to them, but in the event nothing changed. Then finally, last year, the railway bridge up by Susie's was narrowed and this created a major traffic jam at the roundabout, often blocking the entrance to Nithsdale Road altogether.

Coup de grace time

Of course most of Strathbungo lives in easy walking distance of Evergreen and they kept the shop open till six weeknights and all day Saturday so there is an element of use it or lose it here. Even so, Debbie is at pains to stress that it wasn't totally their customers' fault. 'A lot of people tried their best to keep us going and we had to think very carefully about whether to close because we didn't want to do that to the community.' She also says that rent and rates were not an issue - if the traffic had been there, they would have coped.

So finally, after trading at a loss for four years and cutting their own salaries year by year, they made the painful decision to shut. Good luck to the girls, and thanks for 14 years of serving the community.

EDITORIAL: What's all the fuss about?

Evergreen is a tremendous loss for Strathbungo, and it's much bigger than the loss of a local source of puy lentils, echinacea and organic flour for one's bread making machine. Most people would have pointed to Evergreen as a real success story, an example of precisely the type of shop we want to attract to Strathbungo. Indeed, our 2002 community survey came up with the same 'wish list' again and again: a fishmonger, a quality greengrocer, an off-sales that understands wine, a bookshop ... all quality shops.

And why not? We have beautiful houses, increasing in value all the while, and a great park. We have good pubs and some excellent cafés and bistros. We have a model of sustainable shops just across the railway tracks in Kildrostan Street and Nithsdale Road. But what can we do to extend this to the other half of Nithsdale Road and the whole stretch of Pollokshaws Road?

In fact, taking Evergreen's story to heart, do we know how many of these seemingly successful shops are struggling?

The Strathbungo Society is currently putting together a proposal for a Community Conference in the autumn to identify community priorities, define some initiatives and projects and then take ownership of them. Local shopping will be one - others will include planning and how better traffic management can improve the amenity and businesses in and around Strathbungo.

Meanwhile - as regards the shops, use them, tell your neighbours to use them too, and think next time before you pop into a supermarket or haul yourself out to Braehead. We've got a post office sub-station in Pollokshaws Road that does a nice line in birthday cards, a butcher shop that specialises in Aberdeen Angus, a couple of really good hairdressers and a new art gallery where you can make an investment that's safer than ISAs - and a lot prettier to look at.

It's not always about whether you can buy something cheaper or quicker elsewhere - it's about whether you want the opportunity to buy it here, where you need it - and from people you know.

The Strathbungo Society needs your help... Bungo all the way to the bank!

The penny's finally dropped ... without some realistic fundraising, the Strathbungo Society can't go on publishing newsletters, let alone staging community-wide events. That's why we're having our first-ever coffee morning on Saturday, 15 March, starting at 10 am (see page 1). It's a blatant fundraiser and the Queens Park Baptists' Hall is nice but rather large - please help us fill it! We also welcome donations of books (in good condition) to 39 Regent Park Square and home-baking to the hall from 9am on the day.

Be a Friend?

We're also setting up a new Friends scheme that we hope will be a relatively painless way to produce a dependable source of income for the Society. As a Friend of Strathbungo, you are asked to pledge just £1 a month by standing order (deducted quarterly or annually) to the Society. If you live in Strathbungo, you will automatically become a member of the Strathbungo Society.

This does not change our regular membership rates of £3 per household (£2 unwaged), which entitle you to voting rights at our AGM. And we also realise that some people will find any amount difficult, and we value their interest and support.

However, if we can count on a solid core of 'Friends' who can make a small but regular commitment, we'll be miles ahead!

The standing order mandates will be available by 15 March - you can pick up one at the coffee morning, at 38 Queen Square, at our AGM in June - or print out your own from our website (www.strathungo.co.uk) and send it in. Simple as that to get us out of a hard spot!

SPRING HOME IMPROVEMENT SPECIAL

Strathbungo was designated a conservation area in back in 1974, a time when the bulldozers were almost literally massed on the borders. The Council's decision to list our Victorian terraces and tenements saved them for a new generation of homeowners who have seen their efforts handsomely rewarded. Here we feature tips from three experts, designed to help you avoid hassles with contractors and Council alike while maintaining and improving your home.

Here's advice from Adrian Jamieson, Vice President of the Federation of Plastering and Drywall Contractors Scotland

DANGER: COWBOYS AT WORK

A guide to selecting trade contractors

1. Select at least three contractors and ask for written quotations
2. Use your own instinct as to the type of company you are dealing with. Good indicators are how your enquiry is handled, presentation of the representative who visits your house and the way your quotation is presented
3. Look for companies with trade association membership as they can be used in case of complaint.
4. Always ask for references from recent, similar jobs and never hesitate to contact previous clients. They're normally happy to tell you about the work that they have had carried out.
5. When you are happy with the price and completely clear on the extent of work that's needed, make firm arrangements for the work to be undertaken.
6. Prepare a short note stating the price, the date for the work to be carried out and the approximate timeframe. Keep a copy for your records and ask the contractor to acknowledge receipt.
7. Never pay for work upfront unless this is for a specific item that will be in your possession from the time that you pay for it.
8. If you have any concerns about the work while it is being carried out, raise it with the tradesmen. If you are still concerned, contact the manager or director.
9. Upon completion, check the work and make sure you are completely satisfied before paying for it. Address any complaints immediately - don't wait until you receive a reminder invoice as this is often affects the credibility of a complaint.
10. Pay for the work promptly as this helps with cash flow for contractors who often carry heavy expenses for wages and materials. They'll remember that, should you ever call on them again!

Follow these guidelines and you should get the job done with the minimum of stress.

Thanks to Adrian, a surveyor for Murchies Plastering Company (571 3890), who has worked on several of the major townhouse restorations round Strathbungo.

Should your spring fix-up project involve more than paint and wallpaper, you may be moving into a tricky area, especially if you live in a listed building. Strathbungo Committee Member Stephen Lamb has this advice.

How to keep in the planners' good books

- 1 Works to the outside of listed buildings almost always require approval from the Council Planning Department. Get free advice from the Conservation Officers Jim Dunsmuir on 287 8626 and Ruth Smith on 287 8635.
 - 2 Internal alterations, in particular sub-division/reorganisation of rooms will require consent - again the Conservation Officers will advise.
 - 3 You may need a Building Warrant if the works involve altering walls, reorganising rooms or making new openings such as doorways. Consult the Duty Officer at Building Control on 287 5937.
 - 4 You don't need a Building Warrant for repairs or exact replacements such as structural works involved with rot repairs or replacement windows, providing they are timber and an exact replica of the existing ones. PVC windows are never acceptable in a listed building.
 - 5 All trees in a conservation area are protected and any pruning, lopping or felling requires approval. That doesn't mean you can't deal with a tree that has become a nuisance, but first contact Planning's landscape section on 287 8673.
 - 6 Get your paperwork in order. If you are advised that approval is not required, follow this up with a letter and ask for confirmation from the Council. You will avoid problems in the future should you come to sell your house.
 - 7 If you need approvals, you may need to appoint an architect. The Professional Body RIAS (Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland) will advise on suitable architects in your area on 0131 229 7545 or at www.rias.org.uk.
 - 8 Make sure that any architect, architectural technologist and/or structural engineer carries professional indemnity insurance. Ask to see their documents if you appoint them.
 - 9 Neighbours can be a valuable source of information. Strathbungo has some houses and flats that have been refurbished to a very good and stylish standard. There is no better recommendation than word of mouth.
 - 10 The Strathbungo Society has links with a number of professional services in the area - join the team and take advantage of the pool of knowledge!
- Stephen is a Chartered Architect who lives locally and works in Glasgow.**

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL, SAYS COUNCIL'S HERITAGE SURVEY

Ruth Smith, the Council official charged with drawing up Strathbungo's first ever Conservation Area Appraisal, has surveyed the whole conservation area and pronounced it a wee gem, albeit not without flaws.

The Council is committed in the new City Plan to undertake a detailed appraisal of each of Glasgow's conservation areas. Ruth, who's a senior architect in the Council's Heritage team from Development and Regeneration Services, admitted that she was more familiar with the City Centre and the West End than with Strathbungo, but not any more.

She has surveyed the whole conservation area from March Street to Marywood Square and from Moray Place to Pollokshaws Road. She's been up and down the back lanes, taken scores of photographs of lampposts, gates, railings, chimney pots, the back lanes, front elevations and boundaries. Her report, much of it drafted in Morya Jane's (she loved it!), is yet to be formally submitted but her initial reaction was that 'small is beautiful'.

Meeting with the Strathbungo Society's Ian Stark and Kevin Kane, Ruth said she was encouraged by the evident interest of local residents in preserving the character of the area and trying to replace the heritage where it had been lost (for example, railings). However, her report will not be all glowing. She worries that the unique charm of the back lanes is being eroded by the loss of the boundary wall line and the intrusion of open car parking bays. To

Ruth, the enclosure of the lanes is what gives them their charm. She is also concerned that on-street parking is undermining Strathbungo 'quality of place' and who'd argue there? Nevertheless, a new eye sees different elements and she waxed lyrical about the overlooked importance of the Strathbungo's chimney stacks and pots. Her report will inform the Council's policies with regard to the necessary planning permissions required in the Strathbungo Conservation Area in the future. Kevin and Ian pointed out that the Society was keen to raise awareness of the area's built heritage and work with the Council to encourage the progressive reinstatement of heritage features, such as the back lanes, railings and lighting that give Strathbungo its unique feel.

We asked Interior Designer Catherine Henderson for some tips on creating unique homes within our Victorian terraces.

Designs on Strathbungo: YOUR STARTER FOR TEN

1. Pay attention to the bones of the house. Replace or restore sash windows, cornicing, fireplaces etc.
2. Take into consideration the natural light in all rooms. Work with it, not against it. For example, do not try to lighten a naturally dark room with a light colour. It will always end up looking cold.
3. The Victorians were not afraid of colour - dark rich red, deep green, brown, terracotta and ochre were all popular.
4. The essence of the Victorian era was luxury and opulence. If you are trying to create the look, don't hold back with sumptuous velvets, lavish trimmings, heavily patterned florals and damasks.
5. Chairs and sofas should be overstuffed, covered in velvets for winter with loose covers in chintz for summer. Shawls and lace were often used in conjunction.
6. Moorish and Turkish styles were fashionable for studies and libraries - probably as a result of the "Grand Tours" taken by the upper classes.
7. Persian, Turkish and Indian rugs on parquet floors complete the look. Animal skins were also popular on top of rugs.
8. Free-standing cast iron baths and wash stands with glazed majolica tiles were an innovation in the bathroom.
9. Encaustic tiles, in elaborate patterns were often used in halls along with Lincrusta (first commercially produced in 1877) under the dado rail. This was usually painted in dark colours finished off with a glaze. The wall above the dado was usually wallpapered with heavily patterned paper. The frieze and ceiling would have been painted in cream, stone or pastel - rarely white.
10. Don't be afraid to mix the old with the new. The way we live now differs greatly to how people lived in the Victorian era and our homes need to reflect that. Take advantage of the technological advances in lighting, plumbing and design.

Catherine's been practising what she preaches in her home in Strathbungo. Her showroom is in Kildrostan Street (423 4321).

COMING NEXT ISSUE:

Let's hear it for Art Deco!

Strictly speaking, the 20th century red sandstone terraces of Vennard, Thornclyffe and Carswell Gardens, Titwood Road and parts of Moray Place are not part of the conservation area, but they are very much a part of the overall ethos of our little island off Queens Park. They are not as tightly bound by formal consent, but owners are encouraged to uphold the general principles of conservation and recent years have seen the value rising just as steadily as the rest. Next time, we're highlighting a few homes that show how to capitalise on the very stylish design features of these 'bijou' properties.

Friends of Queens Park Public Meeting

Tuesday, 18 March - 7.30 pm

Langside Halls

Programme includes:

- report from Friends of QP Steering Group
- Councillor Alistair Watson, Parks Convenor, on how the City Council and Friends can work together to attract resources
- feedback from park users and local community – you!
- vote to adopt a formal constitution for the new group.

If you're interested in Queens Park, come along and let others know. Remember, it's your park! More info on 632 8379.

ntl: TIME FOR DIGITAL STRATHBUNGO?

Have you wondered if Strathbungo would ever be cabled up so that you could get your phone, internet, broadband and satellite television service all from one source, without having to pay a whole string of different suppliers - or sticking an ugly satellite dish onto the back of your home?

Then this may turn out to be very good news indeed.

The Society has made contact with the cable company NTL on the back of concern that Strathbungo residents are currently being denied cable services (despite the fact that cable runs up Pollokshaws Road). We also expressed concern about the adverse impact that satellite dishes have on the neighbourhood, especially the conservation area between Nithsdale Drive and Marywood Square.

In addition, there was a feeling that the push to renovate the back lanes may provide

an opportunity not only to upgrade the surface but put in new services under those historic cobbles.

Well, just as we went to press, James Daniel of NTL Home has replied, saying that they are interested in talking further. As he explains it, 'Our first considerations when moving into a new area are to establish demand and identify a cost-effective link to our existing network and there is an opportunity to survey local interest through the Strathbungo Society, and the forthcoming lane renewal scheme offers a possible "way in" to the area.'

Consequently NTL and the Society will meet in March to discuss the matter further. If you have any immediate views, send them to the *Strathbungo News* at 38 Queen Square or email news@strathbungo.co.uk.



CATFLAP Spring Fair

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10.30am - 3pm

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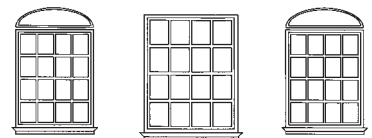
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NEWS in Brief NEWS in Brief

What's happening in the Park?

Strathbungo Society Chair Kevin Kane has also been chairing the Friends of Queens Park Steering Group, which will be holding a public meeting on 18 March (see page 5). Says Kevin: "Our aim is to develop Queens Park as one of Glasgow's great parks. It already is a great park - just look at the Glasshouse and coffee shop, the new Rose Garden (between Camphill House and Langside Avenue) and the boating pond - but lots, lots more could be done with imagination and flair. We need people to add their thoughts before we commission someone to masterplan Queens Park." Got some ideas? Don't miss this chance to make your voice heard!

Glasgow Conservation Forum to focus on Southside

A meeting is being planned for May in Pollokshields Burgh Hall to consider whether to establish a Southside Conservation Forum to develop and promote the built heritage across this area of the city. Contact Strathbungo Secretary Jim Allison on 423 1435 for an update, nearer to the time.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH



Don't leave it to everyone else!



– from the Sports Desk

This year's traditional Ne'erday rounders competition between the kids and parents of Regent Park Square and Moray Place was won decisively by the Moray Placers. Despite heavy conditions underfoot, the teams battled it out to the general bemusement of Ne'erday park users. Now in its sixth year, this annual Bungo event has been around longer than some of its players and draws participants from as far afield as Langside and Shields Road. [If this were the States, we'd call it the World Series! - ED.]

The first-ever BUNGo brunch

The Strathbungo Society has done arts festivals, back lane galas and Hogmanay street parties, but we've never attempted a plain old-fashioned coffee morning ... until now. Our maiden effort is set for next Saturday morning at the QP Baptist Church Hall (page 1). Even if you've never been to a Bungo event before, we hope you'll come along and support this one - there will be some interesting stalls, in addition to the traditional beverages and home baking. We need the money (see page 2) and if it's well received, we'll do it again.

CYBER BUNGo

You can now read the Strathbungo News online at www.strathbungo.co.uk.

It's just a quick temporary site with a few back issues and an email link – designed to hold the fort till we launch our proper site later this year. Among the bells & whistles we're planning to add when the real site goes live are several interactive features you can contribute to, including a virtual gallery of photos, a user's guide to trades-folk and a community noticeboard where you can post news of local events, lost & founds, etc.

Only you can beat the bin rakers!

Those midgie rakers at it again. For the past several weeks, there's been a spate of wheelie bins being overturned and plastic bags split and raked through, leaving entire lengths of lane strewn with litter – despite the work of both the weekly (Wednesday) uplift team and the Friday clean up team. The best defence is simple and oft repeated: keep wheelie bins in your back garden or court, don't put them out until the night before collection and bring them in as soon as they've been emptied. If you leave them in the lanes, you're asking for trouble.



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287 2018

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