

STRATHBUNGO NEWS



The Strathbungo Society

A Quarterly Newsletter

February 2015

SAVE THE DATE!

The Strathbungo Society's **SPRING FLING 2015**

Saturday 28 March
10.30am – 1.30pm

Queen's Park
Baptist Church Hall

180 Queen's Drive*

It's the coffee morning with a difference! Great home baking and stalls, including our famous chocolate tombola, but we're also turning the hall into a gallery for Strathbungo's artists of the future. See all entries in this year's Children and Young People's Art Competition. Vote for your favourite and see if you agree with the judges, whose decisions will be announced at the prize-giving. Update on our Network Rail campaign and Brighter Bungo.

Entry: £1 (includes tea/coffee & cake). Children FREE

*Turn east off Pollokshaws Road, first church on the left!



Flashback to 2004 when local activists occupied the railway bridge and took their banners to George Square to oppose Network Rail's scorched earth policy of trackside maintenance.

Déjà vu: Network Rail threat to Strathbungo's dear green corridor

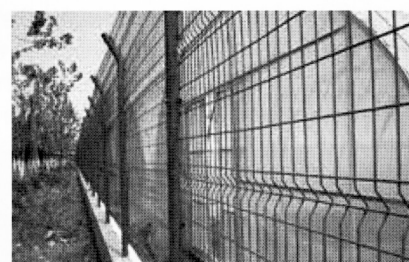
By Fiona Mackinnon

Strathbungo residents are gearing up for another testing time with Network Rail. Under the chainsaw threat – again – are all the trees and shrubs along Moray Place. This time, the Victorian fence that runs along most of the street is also to be destroyed. All to be replaced by high, prison-yard fencing.

On 9 January, Moray Place came home to a letter from Network Rail about "Improvement Work. Clearing vegetation and renewing the boundary fencing with a 1.8 m high green powder coated weldmesh fence". The chainsaws and chippers were due to move in on 23 February. A distinct feeling of déjà vu came across many who fought to save the trees ten years ago when Network Rail last threatened a scorched earth policy.

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon MSP offered to chair a meeting between the Strathbungo Society, resident representatives, our MP and councillors and Network Rail. After agreeing to get around the table, Network Rail then promptly withdrew. They apparently need to clear up land ownership issues and so the work will be done "later in the year".

Network Rail are probably hoping that residents will have lost interest or be away on holiday. Thus we need to use this time to gather information, press for answers and organise. Network Rail must be called to account for their plan to ruin what is specifically mentioned in the Conservation Area Appraisal as a "green barrier" offering attractive vistas along the squares and creating the unique atmosphere of Moray Place and the wider Strathbungo area.



What is 'weldmesh' fencing?

- Weldmesh is a specialised high security fencing material
- Incredibly strong, the wire grid form can be welded with only the smallest gaps, offering no toe or even finger holds for climbing
- Commonly used for prison compounds, industrial premises, airports and high security areas
- With vegetation obliterated on either side, the area will have an extremely oppressive feel.



Continued/

Broken promises

Network Rail have shown a total lack of community relations in not consulting residents: their disregard for the character of a Conservation Area is shocking and the lack of care for an important wildlife corridor is shameful. Worse, there is a complete absence of proper information about their plans. It is crucial that we all make our views known to our MP, MSP, councillors and certainly to Network Rail themselves.

The Strathbungo Society heard that Network Rail were considering replacing the poor wooden fence near the footbridge last year. We were assured by Network Rail that residents would be consulted **before any plans were finalised**. That promise has been broken. Lack of consultation means it is not clear what the rationale behind their plan is. The first notice—out-of-the-blue—said the work was all about “improvement”. When questioned, Network Rail said it was about “trespass and vandalism”. The latest word from them is that “our contractors have identified a number of trees that are either dead, dying or diseased and pose a safety risk”.

But it's not really about safety ...

Everyone understands that safety is important. That's why residents have lobbied Network Rail to secure the gate (erected by themselves) onto the tracks at the Nithsdale Road end, reported damaged fence and occasionally called the British Transport Police if trespassers were seen. Residents of 1-10 Moray Place were delighted and relieved when Network Rail finally removed the dangerous poplar trees after one came down in a storm. It seemed then as if a new era of reasonable communication with Network Rail might be starting. Sadly the present situation indicates that they are not keen to listen or engage.

As well as removing the trees, Network Rail want to demolish the current hoop-topped cast iron fence. They say it dates from around 1898, thereby confirming it as a historic feature. It is neat and well designed, and suits its place facing onto listed buildings.

The proposed replacement is 1.8 meters (nearly six feet) high. It is completely modern, industrial and designed for maximum security. It has no decorative value and will be detrimental to the conservation area. It would be possible to install railings that are more secure but in a suitable Victorian style. Even so, consider that Network Rail's own website notes that vegetation is a good barrier to access. So why remove both the historic fence and the dense barrier of trees, holly and hawthorn?

There is also the issue of where exactly the property boundary lies between the railway and Moray Place is. Some residents have deeds that clearly state they own a strip of land on the rail side of the road. The feu documents for the whole area from 1859 say the boundary is the stone wall (starting a Susie's shop) and “the continuing thorn hedge”.

Having a rail track nearby is part of life in Strathbungo. It's a barrier to be negotiated, a source of some noise but also a beautiful wild edge to an urban area. Strathbungo and all our homes are only here because of the tracks – and this heritage must be treated with some respect.

Last time they came with their chainsaws, a magnificent surge of activism stopped Network Rail in its tracks. They will be wrong to underestimate Strathbungo again.

ACTION POINTS

- Tell your elected representatives what you think of the plans
- Let Network Rail know how you feel and ask for more details about the plan
- If you live near the railway, check your deeds to see what land you own
- Keep the Strathbungo Society up to speed with any new information
- Check the Bungo Blog and Facebook for updates

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Bungo at the Bells

Hundreds of friends and neighbours welcomed 2015 in at Bungo at the Bells, our annual Hogmanay street party. There was a real mix of generations, spilling round the corner of Queen Square at Moray Place. The night was dry and unseasonably warm, and the last revellers were still dancing in the streets till nearly 2am.

After 17 years, Bungo at the Bells may seem like it just happens, but that overlooks the skills of Teresa Mooney, Allison Hussain and their team who set up the event and tidied up after. Strathbungo Society volunteers served mulled wine, whisky, Glayva and juice, mince pies, Christmas cake and shortbread, while Andrew Downie kept the music loud and lively. Thanks to all, and a special nod to Ann Downie and Gordon MacKenzie for generous donations of lavish festive fare. And thanks to the unidentified piper who wandered by and treated us to a few tunes.





Thank you for the music

Joe McGinley, who has died aged 63 in Devon, was known to many for his role in establishing signature Strathbungo events such as Bungo at the Bells and Bungo in the Back Lanes. He lived here with his wife Kay Caldwell from 1993 till 2011.

Joe was a true polymath. A musician who could have succeeded equally well as an academic, linguist or professional card-player. A performer, whose rapid-fire one-liners and ability to rattle off a tune – any tune – on his keyboard, belied a gifted classical musician with a bristling intellect.

He opted instead for a career in community arts, starting with Edinburgh's Craigmillar Festival. Throughout the 1980s he composed original music for the stage, touring with various theatre companies.

In 1989 he became music director of *Call That Singing!* – a major component of Glasgow's year as 1990 European City of Culture. This was not a choir so much as a 'singing audience' of up to 500 people. It took all of Joe's powerful charisma to pull off such a project, along with his ability to play, conduct and entertain all at the same time. And make it fun.

The ultimate trouper

Call that Singing! ran for 16 years and brought Joe his widest audience. Less well known was that he was diagnosed in 1997 with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Indeed, when he played at our inaugural Hogmanay street party in 1998, he was about to undergo an autologous bone marrow transplant, making it all the more remarkable that the show really did go on.

Joe latterly turned to the smaller stage of jazz where he found his true musical home as a performer. He enjoyed the intellectual challenge of jazz and improvising with other musicians, often as part of Jazz Co, whom he cajoled into playing in our back lanes.

After moving to Devon, life settled into a pleasant mix of Bach, books, bridge and backgammon. As always, with perfect timing, he bowed out on Hogmanay, and here in Strathbungo, just after the Bells, we raised three cheers for the man who had done so much to make this event happen.

Joe was famously colour blind and couldn't dance to save himself, but he could hear the most nuanced colour in a medieval motet and keep 500 amateurs singing together in perfect time.

He is survived by Kay, his daughters Alison and Helen, stepchildren Leigh, Alice and Owen, and his beloved granddaughter Rosalind.

A rerr terr at the Bungo Birl

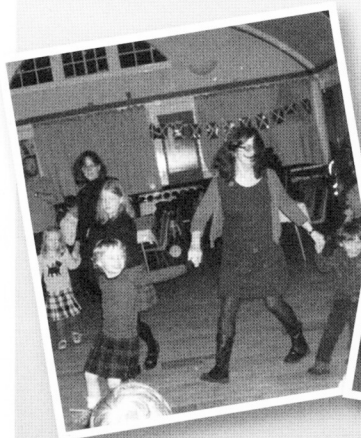
Alison Hunter reports.

A huge thank you to everyone who donned their kilts and strutted their ceilidh stuff at Strathbungo's second Bungo Birl in November. We sold 120 tickets and raised almost £400 for the Strathbungo Society to help the organisation continue hosting events such as Bungo in the Back Lanes and Bungo at the Bells.

The night was a real family affair with very young dancers taking to the loor alongside older relatives and friends. Although this meant you had to watch where you stepped at times, it made for a fun, multi-generational night. Here's to next year!



Thanks to [from left] Alison Hunter, Allison Hussain and Paola Rezzilli for organising a brilliant family night.





Bin raking is not on!

Bin rakings is a continuing problem and is often raised by residents on the Bungo Blog and Facebook. Both LES and the Police are keen to point out that bin raking is not just an irritation to residents – it is a crime.

Aside from the mess they leave behind and its attraction to vermin, bin rakers can pose a real threat to your personal security. "All personal papers have a value to the crime fraternity," says Sergeant Blair Henderson from the local Community Policing Team. "This information can be used for ID fraud purposes so people must be aware of the basics. Shred or destroy it so it doesn't fall into the wrong hands.

"If you see people sorting through bins, it's a police matter--don't feel it's not important enough to bother us."

He advises people not to confront bin rakers, but to call 101 while it's happening. And to have a look at Police Scotland's website for general advice on personal safety (follow the links at: www.scotland.police.uk/your-community).

Sgt Henderson and his community cop colleagues are based at Gorbals Police Station- ask for them on 101.

GET CONNECTED!

Fly-tipping & Graffiti

Clean Glasgow Hotline

0300 343 7027

Report problems to dedicated environmental enhancement teams.

Bulk Uplift

0141 287 9700

Arrange free uplift of large or heavy items from a collection point outside your home.

National Re-use Phone Line

0800 0665 820

Free collection of re-useable household items directly from inside your home. These will be redistributed to charities.

Clean Glasgow App

Free from your relevant App Store to make reports or requests from your smartphone.

Clean Glasgow Campaign

Details of all these services at:

www.glasgow.gov.uk

The Strathbungo Society has representatives on a number of organisations and forums where they can make the concerns and aspirations of our community heard. This time, Kevin Kane explains the work he and Nick Kempe are undertaking on our behalf.

Pollokshields Partnership

Pollokshields Partnership is Strathbungo's 'local area committee' as was, a forum where local issues can be raised with the Council, be that roads, refuse, community safety or indeed anything else of local concern.

Unlike the previous Council Local Area Committees, PP members include not only our three City Councillors - Baillie Raja (Chair), Cllr Macleod and Cllr Meikle – but also voluntary and community groups, such as the Strathbungo Society. Officials from the Council as well as the NHS, Police and Fire and Rescue attend and report to meetings.

The Partnership has taken a while to find its feet, having had to take time to become more informed of the city-wide priorities set by the Glasgow Community Planning Partnership, of which it is the most local expression. However, over the past six months it has started getting to grips with some key, local issues.

For example, refuse collection and fly-tipping – especially in East Pollokshields – is a particular focus.

This has meant trying to ensure a more joined-up approach between Land and Environmental Services (LES), enforcement officials and Community Safety Glasgow Ltd, which supports community clean-up campaigns such as Brighter Bungo.

As part of this drive for a cleaner local environment, we recently pushed for a local 'site meeting' with LES officials - see report on page 5.

Are you willing to give Strathbungo a voice in an organisation you're involved with? Let us know at: news@strathbungo.co.uk.

SHAWLANDS SQUARE: A new civic space

Glasgow City Council has just announced the results of a public consultation into the development of a new civic square to the front of Langside Halls. The square is to be created by closing the access road from Pollokshaws Road into Langside Avenue. This new civic space will be a key part of the on-going Shawlands Town Centre Development Plan which has already seen the improvement and widening of pavements to the south side of Kilmarnock Road in Shawlands.

"The level of responses has been truly outstanding with over 168 local people and businesses from over 400 consultees providing detailed feedback," according to Senior Planner David Dunlop.

The consultation sought people's views on the purpose, design principles and desired uses of the new square. These stretched from simply somewhere to sit down to a place for local groups to set up public stalls - and even somewhere to watch Wimbledon on big screens!

Feedback will be used by the Council to draw up a design brief to develop a formal detailed physical design for the square, something that the Council will also consult upon. As to the name of the new square, the Council is to be asked to formally adopt the name 'Shawlands Square'.

An early action by the Council – and following positive feedback – was the siting of a new, twice-monthly Farmer's Market, from Saturday, 7 February at Langside Halls.

This, plus the on-going community-based efforts to redevelop Langside Halls, all signal a welcome investment in new community facilities in Shawlands – 'the heart of the cosmopolitan South Side'. - **Kevin Kane**



The dustbin of history



Post-Halloween collection

Faced with a number of on-going issues relating to bins and rubbish collection, Kevin Kane and Nick Kempe, our representatives on the Pollokshields Partnership, pressed for a site meeting with Land and Environmental Services (LES).

Meeting rubbish collection issues head on

By Teresa Mooney, Strathbungo Society Chair

In late January Charlie Maloney and Gerry McAlvaney from LES met up with Kevin and Nick, plus Fiona MacKinnon and myself for a walkabout in the 'Morays', as our lanes are known to the folk who clean them.

Among the topics covered:

Bins not returned after emptying

In addition to the frustration for residents, this creates huge problems at the T-junctions of lanes with bins blocking access. It also leads to bins being damaged or lost. LES agreed to reinforce with workers the need to return bins to their original location.

Mixing up recycling with household waste

LES workers have been observed throwing the contents of green, brown and blue bins together in the same vehicle, particularly when using the small trucks. This practice is not allowed and LES will look into it.

Fly-tipping and Bulk Uplift

Both are ongoing problems and LES assured us that they are currently considering several more proactive options - watch this space. Meanwhile, see box for contact details.

Sainsbury's litter 'footprint'

We would like to see Sainsbury's cover a wider area of litter picking (including across the road where customers park). A new litter bin was re-positioned on the Darnley Road side of the footbridge on the same day as our meeting!

Positioning of commercial bins in Nithsdale Road

They are currently all on the pavements, obstructing the footpath. LES say that businesses pay for this service and fire regulations prevent siting them inside the properties. As the whole road is going to have marked parking bays, we proposed siting commercial bins on the road in dedicated bays. Kevin agreed to raise this with Pollokshields Partnership.

In the interest of balance we also asked how local residents could help LES and Charlie and Gerry offered these suggestions:

Access to lanes for LES vehicles

Bins kept in the lane making it difficult for even the smallest LES vehicle to negotiate their way through - this is especially so for bulk uplift. (It's hard to imagine how they will be emptied on the day if they aren't in the lane! -Ed.) If possible, keep your bins inside your property and only put them out on collection days, then take them in as soon as you can - this also discourages bin rakers.

Think about what goes in which bin

Dog mess, for example, should go in green bins, not brown ones. Refresh your memory on what is allowed - and not allowed - in recycling bins. If you mix them up, it defeats the purpose.

Cut overhanging vegetation

This can impede access to the lanes for both vehicles and workers. Get your clippers out!

All in all, we felt it was a positive meeting, and we will continue to monitor the situation. Meanwhile, your comments and suggestions are always welcome.

Brighter Bungo set for March

News from Bryan Miller, Co-ordinator

The next Brighter Bungo community clean-up will take place on **Sunday, 8 March**. Please come along to the Nithsdale Road/Moray Place intersection anytime between 11am and 1pm to help out. All equipment is provided.

We had excellent support for Brighter Bungo throughout 2014, with attendance topping 20 people for some clean-ups. A big thank-you to everyone who helped out during the year.

We will have a stall at the Spring Fling on 28 March [see page 1] with information about getting involved. We want to recruit a number of "litter volunteers" armed with pickers, gloves and black bag who'll help keep the place tidy throughout the year. Do come along and sign up!

As well as the organised clean-ups, we encourage everyone to be aware of litter problems at all times. It's important to phone in reports of bin raking or graffiti in progress to the Police using the non-emergency number 101 - or of fly-tipping etc. directly to the Council at clean@glasgow.gov.uk or via brighterbungo@strathbungo.co.uk.



Litter pickers at work



What a load of rubbish!



Clean sweep



Arty Time!

Get out those pens, pencils, paints and paper! It's time to enter our annual Children and Young People's Art Competition.

The theme this year—chosen by one of last year's competitors—is Strathbungo: Now or in the Future. Use any media you like and any size of paper. Our judges are the artists Avril Paton and Karen Cairns, and they know creativity and imagination when they see it! Entry details are at: www.bungoblog.com or contact this newsletter for information. Good luck!

Winners will get great prizes and the honour of seeing their work exhibited at Mulberry Street, Tapa, Gusto & Relish and Little Botanica.

And even if you don't win ...

All entries will be displayed at our Spring Fling on the 28 March (see page 1), where the public can vote for their favourite entry. If yours gets the most votes, it will be used as the poster background for Bungo in the Back Lanes in June.



Last year's Gallery at the Spring Fling



Katie Goddard, 4½, gets down to business at the Gallery of Modern Art



Daanyaal Hussain, 9, having a lesson in Queen's Park with Karen Cairns



Maryam Faisal, 8, with her mum and brother at GoMA



Blue skies over the Bungo!

Welcome to a new feature in the Strathbungo News. First, imagine a brilliant blue sky (yes, even in a black & white newsletter), now send up a fluffy little thought and see if it will float ...

What would you do to improve our

community? How would you show the world that this is one very special place to live? It doesn't matter how fanciful it is.

See that roundabout where Nithsdale Road, Drive & Street converge? It's functional right enough, but how very dull and dreary. Any thoughts?

Well, we might celebrate the fact that Strathbungo was Scotland's first railway suburb ...

Or how about a statue of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson, right in full view of three fine streets he designed?

Or, they say there was once a fountain on that very spot. Anybody know what happened to it, or even what it looked like?

And while we're at it, how about that wee triangle of land near Sammy Dow's? What would make it ours? Maybe a map of the heritage trail through the Bungo?

You'd be surprised how many grand schemes started with a daft idea. Steve Jobs didn't say that – we did—so get thinking and send us your ideas for the next issue.

Go on – the sky's the limit!



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We welcome your letters and short articles for the next issue no later than **15 May 2015** at:
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