STRATHBUNGO NEWS

The Strathbungo Society
A quarterly newsletter

SUMMER 2025

25 YEARS OF BUNGO IN THE BACK LANES

Saturday 21st June 2025, 1pm - 5pm

From its reboot in 1995, the Strathbungo Society was laying on ceilidhs, coffee mornings and street parties, all aimed at entertaining local folk and building a community. Then in 2000, we turned the tables and asked the community to do the entertaining. KAY CALDWELL remembers.

We were trying to solve a problem—several problems really. The back lanes were a mess. Uncared for, untidy and under-exploited. Also, as a largely residential area, we had no communal meeting places to call our own. And yet, the lanes offered great spaces, if only we could turn them into something to be proud of.

The idea for an event was based on how communities in the Netherlands used similar spaces for market stalls. A quick survey revealed almost two acres of lanes, all privately owned—they were ours! All we had to do was make everybody love them.

We asked Glasgow City Council for a big one-off clean-up. They told us our lanes, given their narrowness and poor surfaces, were one of the most expensive parts of the city for refuse collections. But somehow, we'd struck a chord with the Council and they were invested in getting our event off the ground—or do I mean 'onto the ground'?

Over the next few weeks, it seemed every household in Strathbungo was getting rid of its junk, but the lanes were finally cleared. Meanwhile the Parks Department cut back years of overgrowth.

So now all we had to do was sell the idea to the people who owned the lanes—our neighbours. In those pre-social media days, we used the newsletter, flyers, posters, arm-twisting and shameless begging. We were not asking people to attend this event—we were asking them to *be* the event.

On the day, we knew we had a couple of beer tents, a jazz band, a barbecue, a plant stall and ...well, an hour before, there wasn't much else. Then, one by one, gates opened and people began setting up.

Bric-a-brac, books, art. A physio offering massages. A beekeeper with honey and candles. All round the lanes, our community came together and created a festival.

Hard to believe that was a quarter of a century ago.

Today our little event draws thousands of people. We even got through lockdown with 'NOT Bungo in the Back Lanes".

Of course, you know an event is working when you hear people say 'Now next year I'm going to ...'

Bungo in the Back Lanes is on 21st June, 1-5 pm.

So what are you doing this year?

How it started back in 2000—were you there?

STRATHBUNGO VOTES FOR INDEPENDENTS

We're not talking politics—it's independent businesses that make Strathbungo great.

It's been a heady few years for Strathbungo with accolades coming from near and far. The Sunday Times named us one of the best places to live in Scotland, not to forget Time Out magazine ranking us as the 22nd coolest community in the world—yes, that's right, on the whole planet. Believe that if you will, but one thing they all praise about Strathbungo, along with its community festivals and gorgeous architecture, is the wealth of independent businesses that have found a home here.

You need only compare our vibrant streetscape to districts with boarded up shops and broken down services to know how lucky we are.

From authentic gelato to vintage clothing, designer ceramics to Thai massage, there's a long list of independent traders who are living their personal dreams right here in Strathbungo. We're spotlighting two of them in this issue, but remember—

When it comes to sustaining independent businesses, they all need you to vote with your feet!

Want your business to feature next time? Want to suggest a business you use? Or write s piece? Let us know.

news@strathbungo.co.uk

BYGONE BUNGO

Recent deep dives into our local history have included a tragedy at Strathbungo Station, and house histories of 38 Queen Square and 17 & 31 Regent Park Square.

There's Matthew Waddell who died in the Crarae Quarry Disaster; John Miller who invented the waxed cotton jacket; Hugh Rowe who sent his young children away to live in boarding houses; the poor French émigés, the Vérel family, who ended up with interests in chemicals, Spanish mining, photography, india-rubber and shipping; and my old favourite, Geoffrey Boothroyd (left), the inspiration for "Q" from James Bond. Read them all at bygone.bungoblog.com.

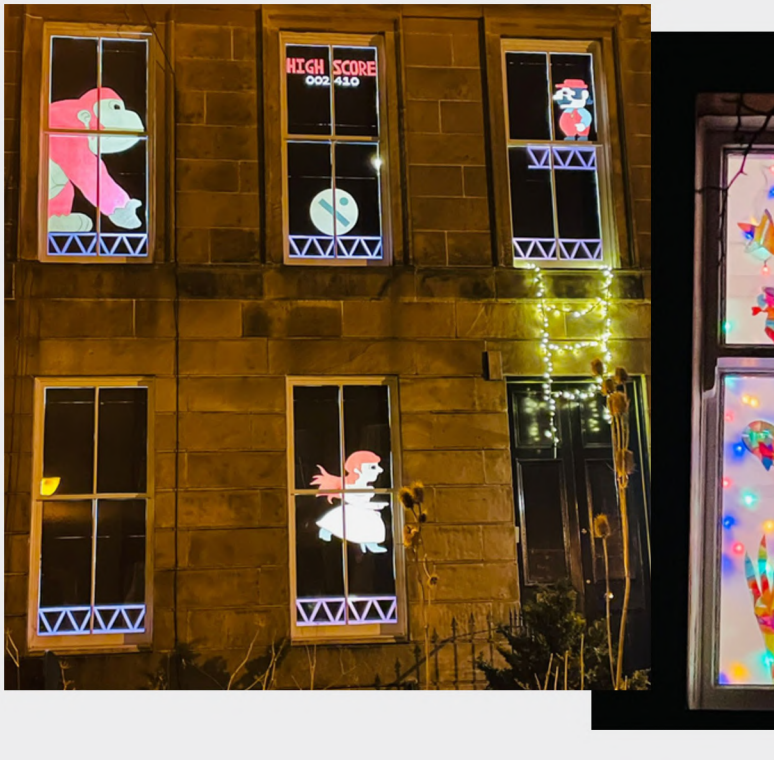
And look out for possible guided tours as part of Glasgow's Doors Open Day celebration in September. You can follow Bygone Bungo on Facebook & BlueSky.

WINDOW WANDERLAND 2025

It just gets bigger and better each year. Here are a handful of the many stunning windows from our February 2025 outdoor art gallery. If yours isn't here, it's lack of space, not quality!

Plans for next year include getting schools to help people who are unsure of how to make a splash. We also hope to recruit street champions to encourage more windows, especially from the Garden streets.

Should we suggest a community-wide theme next year or just continue to let imaginations run wild – what do you think?



@66 HAIR AND LIFESTYLE

66 Nithsdale Road

Graeme Fawns opened @66 in Nithsdale Road in November 2021, just eight days before the second lockdown. ‘So there I was with no business, no clients, no money, and a £2K sheep …’

Despite the bumpy start, @66 reopened the following spring and has grown into a thriving business. The atmosphere is lively, quirky and welcoming, with a focus on gender-neutral hairdressing and colour services, using high-quality organic products.

Graeme initially studied art and design, and it shows. Mavis, the aforementioned sheep gracing the window, was created by a London designer from the Harry Potter films. The black hare-themed stained glass over the doorway was Graeme’s own design. The colourful frontage shows how much fun you can have within grade-B conservation guidelines. Inside are many original touches, and always there are fresh flowers.

But central to it all are the staff. Going into hairdressing 15 years ago, Graeme developed his skills in London and Glasgow. When it came time to open his own salon, he knew the importance of staff feeling secure and valued in their work. That’s why his fourteen employees, including three apprentices, have full benefits and he invests heavily in ongoing training and development.

‘This is my home,’ he says, ‘my family.’

In response to the growing client base, in April he opened a second salon, this one in Finneston at 1143 Argyll St. So it’s called @1143? ‘Of course not, it’s @66. That’s not just our address, it’s our brand.’

SOME GREAT REWARD

674 Pollokshaws Road

Some Great Reward, an innovative 'music with coffee' shop, takes its name from the seminal Depeche Mode album which its founder Olly Macfadden grew up listening to as a kid in Pollokshields. Olly later moved on to playing guitar and bass himself with a band (recently reformed) called My Favourite Sneakers. Over time, however, work and family took on more prominence but music has always remained his passion. Since 2018 it's also been his business.

Some Great Reward opened first in Victoria Road, more as a cafe with records. Since moving to The Cooperage in Strathbungo, it has become a prime spot for vinyl enthusiasts throughout Glasgow.

If you have not yet ventured down the wee cobbled lane at 674 Pollokshaws Road, faced with murals on either side, The Cooperage is a real discovery.

The old whisky barrel factory is now a hive of small businesses around a courtyard with open-air seating.

The store is managed full-time by Strathbungo resident Faye Woodcock: 'We love music, and we are passionate about physical formats, particularly vinyl. Our aim is to source some of the very best new & rare music around.' They are also keen to support local artists and events.

Vinyl doesn't come cheap, but this shop is always open to people who want to come in and just enjoy the experience of browsing through the collection. Faye is a dab hand with their coffee machine and is always ready to talk music.

Open all days except Tuesdays. They run an online business as well at www.somegreatreward.scot.

Thanks to the Govanhill Choir, key organisers Duncan and Kem Gammie, Emma Pais and Imelda Devlin—and to the creative talents and energies of Bungo folk for putting on a spectacular show!

BUNGO IN THE BACK LANES

SATURDAY 21ST JUNE 1-5PM

RESIDENTS' STALLS
BEER GARDENS
LIVE MUSIC
HOMEBAKING
FOOD STALLS
TEA GARDEN
TOMBOLA
PLANT SALE
MAKERS' MARKET
CHILDREN'S GARDEN

ALL EVENTS TAKE PLACE IN THE BACK LANES
BETWEEN NITHSDALE RD & VENNARD GARDENS

STRATHBUNGO SOCIETY

Glasgow CITY COUNCIL

BUNGO IN THE BACK LANES IS ORGANISED & FUNDED BY THE STRATHBUNGO SOCIETY (REG. CHARITY: SC38276)
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2025

NEWS IN BRIEF

Brighter Bungo

Well done to all who turned out for our recent Brighter Bungo. Here's organiser Imelda Devlin with Margot and Harris, two energetic volunteers proving you are never too young to keep our lanes tidy.

Parking permits? Pavement parking? The bins?

Well, that got your attention. Parking and rubbish collection are perennial headaches in Strathbungo, but the times they are a'changing and rumours are a'flyin'; the way the pavement parking ban will be implemented, the introduction of a residents' permit scheme, and possible changes to the way rubbish is collected.

There's also the need to charge EVs without leaving trailing cables everywhere.

Is converting front gardens for parking the way forward, or an eco-disaster?

We need to start thinking what we want, rather than getting some bad implemention. Watch Bungoblog, and the next newsletter for more details, and maybe a survey, ahead of the Society's autumn AGM.

Get your thinking caps on.

The Mission Hall

Take a good look at the east side of the Mission Hall, now luxury housing, in Nithsdale Drive. The polychromatic brick side elevation of this lovely little building by Alexander Skirving was fully revealed for the first time in over a century when the former Arnold Clark garage was demolished. Soon enough it will be hidden again.

A Masterplan for Queen's Park

Drawing on over 1,000 responses to the 2024 community consultation, landscape architects Ironside Farrar have developed detailed proposals for the future development of the park, including new play facilities, new growing spaces, small scale wetlands for sustainable drainage, improvements to entrances and new paths and walkways to better integrate the park and recreation grounds.

Next step is to explore developer-led funding, aiming to have this masterplan adopted by the Council as their 2025-2040 management programme, says Kevin Kane, Chair, Queen's Park Development Plan Steering Group.

Our committee

Want to get involved, or come to discuss an issue? We meet at 7.30pm on the third Tuesday of each month at The Bungo on Nithsdale Road. All welcome.

Dates are on bungoblog.com

Langside Halls

Advanced discussions are underway for Langside Halls Trust and partners to take on the historic Grade-A listed building, which has been closed since 2017.

The plan is to run it as a venue with a mixed programme of community, music, theatre and commercial events, including weddings.

Local councillors from the surrounding areas are fully supportive of the Trust's proposal which could see the landmark building restored and reopening by autumn 2026.

This welcome news comes amid concerns about vandalism and anti-social behaviour at the Halls.

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Would you like to get involved?
Please reach out if you have a story idea or creative piece to feature in our next issue.

If you're interested in contributing, please send your story to news@strathbungo.co.uk with your name and contact information.

Advertising enquiries welcome.