

**The Strathbungo Society**

**Registered Charity Number: SCO38276**

**Trustees' Annual Report: Year ended 30 April 2023**

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## Trustees' Annual Report, Year ended 30 April 2023

### Statutory Information

The Strathbungo Society

Registered Charity Number: SCO38276

Principal Address: 17 Regent Park Square, Strathbungo, Glasgow G41 2AF

Charity Trustees: Chair - Paola Rezzilli; Vice Chair - (vacant); Treasurer - Steven Good; Secretary – Rhiannon Spear

The Strathbungo Society (“the Society”) is governed by a constitution, agreed at the AGM held on 27 October 2015 and available for examination on the Society’s website: [www.bungoblog.com](http://www.bungoblog.com).

At each AGM, the members of the Society elect four Trustees (Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary) plus a Management Committee of up to a maximum of fifteen members. The Trustees hold office until the next AGM, when they are eligible for re-election.

The Society’s objectives as set out in the Constitution are:

- **To advance citizenship and develop the community** by encouraging all members of the community, including families, children, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and the elderly to interact with the aim of improving the community both by bringing the community together and by promoting the provision, maintenance or improvement of public amenities within or in the vicinity of the Strathbungo area; and
- **To promote the conservation of local architectural and environmental heritage**, including the maintenance or improvement of the built and natural environment.

### Operating Review

#### Chair’s Report 2022-23

This Annual Report considers the activities of the Society from April 2022 to April 2023.

Now that we are fully integrated back to life after lockdown, the Society has had a busy year with its calendar of events, the upgrades to the bridges which connect us across the railway to Pollokshields and works to improve the back lanes.

The Strathbungo Society know how to put on an event and this past year was no different. Bungo at the Bells enjoyed another crowded get together at Hogmanay, and Windows Wanderland returned after a two-year hiatus.

The last time we had Windows Wanderland was just before lockdown in 2020 when a national newspaper, The Guardian described it as ‘a glorious psychedelic playground... a retina-shredding explosion of pop culture’. This years’ return was no different! We were able again to enjoy a dazzling display of colour, creativity and community spirit. Visitors came from far and wide to be up close and personal with the artistry of the Strathbungo Gardens and Squares and enjoyed music and cinema all for free. We thank organiser Sarah Reid for her hard work and commitment and grant funding from Glasgow City Council and Southside Housing Association to make this happen.

We continued the success of last year's Bungo in the Back Lanes with another marvellous day this year. After last year's high winds we lost a couple of gazebos and we decided that after at least 20 years of cobbling them together with gaffer tape, branches and a wing and prayer we deserved to spend money on a new solid, heavy duty gazebo for this year. And it worked a treat.

As usual the event took several months of society planning and hours to set up on the day. Thanks to the Glasgow City Council for their grant and as always to the volunteers who help us out so that we're able to stage the event. Also to the local stallholders, especially the new Makers Market venture on Marywood Square, the bars, musicians and food stalls.

Thanks also to the visitors who strolled the lanes and enjoyed the ambience. It's still our most popular and well-loved event of the Strathbungo year.

We had our largest turnout ever at the June Brighter Bungo Clean Up. 25 volunteers turned up to don hi vis jackets and pickers and cleared up a huge amount of refuse from around back lanes. We think the high attendance was due to information being posted on individual street WhatsApp communities, which originated during the Covid lockdowns.

Despite our clean-ups and the many individuals who pick up litter in between times, we have had numerous complaints from community members of fly-tipping in the back lanes. It is something we continue to try to work on with local councillors, but as you can appreciate with reducing council resources, it's not an easy fix.

From the pedestrian footbridge upgrade to vegetation clearance and then on into electrification of the line, there doesn't seem to be a year when we haven't written about Network Rail in the Annual Report! It feels, however, that we may be coming to the end of the Network Rail saga of the past few years.

For all the issues we've had with them, the society would like to acknowledge that Network Rail have, after pressure, on the whole engaged with the community with regard to the pedestrian and road bridge.

The electrification of the line between Glasgow and Barrhead. It is part of a broader Scottish Government investment to decarbonise passenger services across Scotland's railway system by 2035. Its aim is for a more reliable and environmentally friendly rail system.

That meant that some bridges along the line didn't have the required clearance for the overhead powerlines. Two of those bridges were in Strathbungo.

Work on the road bridge between Darnley Road and Moray Place for electrification of the line started in May 2022 and was opened in January 2023. Throughout the works 1-10 Moray Place became a pedestrian and cycle path, with vehicles having to re-route via South Strathbungo.

While work was being done on the road bridge, it was an ideal time for the Society to engage with the council on an Active Travel Plan for the area around the roundabout to make it more pedestrian and cycle friendly. We were told that there would be a safe cycle lane with orca's between the pavement and the road and a discussion was had about this may being a good time to link the South City Way from Pollokshields to Victoria Road.

Our disappointment was palpable when we realised that the cycle lane on the bridge had been re-installed as per the previous design and that there was no longer anything we or the councillors we contacted could do about it.

As work was coming to an end on the road bridge, Network Rail started work on the listed pedestrian footbridge at Regent Park Square.

The footbridge was taken down in January 2023 to start the groundworks for the new bridge and if you haven't read the hilarious obituary of the bridge by Andrew Downie, you should check it out on the Bungo Blog.

After a lot of discussion about where the listed bridge should be homed, it eventually found its way to the Caledonian Railway's Brechin Station. Caledonian Railway is a railway preservation charity that runs trains from Brechin to Bridge of Dun in Angus.

After the initial design for the new bridge was chosen, the Society asked for feedback from residents who quickly got into the nitty gritty of it. The original design had the stairs at either end in brick causing poor visibility, therefore safety concerns, especially on dark nights. After intervention by the society on behalf of the residents, the stairs design was changed to fan out and the replacement of brick walls to railings have improved visibility.

We welcome the change, and most can agree that the new bridge is better than expectation. We saw the new footbridge installed and opened after this year end report.

Last year the Society was granted the full £20 thousand pounds, the maximum that could be applied for from the fund Glasgow City Council had set up to improve private back lanes. After a few hair pulling moments - we were told we only had 6 months to spend the funding and complete the necessary works caused by a last minute discovery that we needed planning permission to do the works we had set out in the application, we finally got that planning permission and set about repairing the designated lanes.

We hired local contractor Richard Birch Gardens to carry out the repair work and concentrated on the lane end of Marywood Square and Vennard Gardens and Marywood and Queen Square. Both areas suffered hugely from flooding which meant walking and cycling there after a rainy day was problematic and we had assessed them as being the areas most in need.

We had some amazing volunteers who actively contributed to the project while we waited for planning permission by clearing drains of silt and earth and preparing for the main repair work. We'd like to thank them for all their hard work in doing such a thankless job. Thanks also to society members Andrew Downie and Stephen Lamb who patiently drove this project through to fruition.

The repairs were completed after this year-end report and just before Bungo in the Back Lanes. The deluge of rain we had in the days after completion saw free draining in the once problem areas, which residents are delighted about.

There are future plans to apply to the City Council Private Lanes Fund for further grants. The Society has identified places that need repairs, but if you have any other ideas for your lanes, please either come to a monthly meeting to let us know your thoughts or contact us through our usual channels.

The Strathbungo Society has been involved in the initial consultation about the proposals to the build 'affordable' new flats on the site of the former Arnold Clark showroom on the corner of Nithsdale Drive and Pollokshaws Road. As a result of this, various modifications were made to the original proposals, most notably a reduction in the height of the building to fit better with neighbouring residential properties.

A planning application was submitted in June 2022 and while there were a significant number of objections to various aspects of the development, including from the Society and Shawlands and Strathbungo Community Council, it was eventually approved in March 2023.

The development of 50 social housing flats is due for completion in 2025.

The Arnold Clark site at the other end of the Nithsdale Drive is currently in planning for the development for privately owned flats. This is outwith the current report timeline, but as it stands a

number of local residents from Strathbungo and Pollokshields and the Society have objected to the current design. I'm sure you will hear more in newsletters over the year.

### **Strathbungo Media and Newsletter**

The publication of the Strathbungo News continued throughout the year bringing news from Strathbungo and to its resident's letterboxes. Our social media Facebook, Instagram and Bygone Bungo's twitter feed have been busy letting our community know what's been happening online.

Finally, as a Society we play our part in the Local Area Partnership, represented by Kevin Kane and will continue to do so. Thanks to all the local councillors and other elected members who have assisted us over the past year with the hope that we can continue to work together in the future.

Paola Rezzilli  
Chair

## **Financial Review**

The Society operates an unrestricted current account, through which it runs its ongoing activities. Trustees receive no remuneration for any of the work that they do.

As shown in the following receipts and payments account, the Society had a surplus of £19,144 for the financial year ending 30 April 2023. This surplus is almost entirely attributable to the early receipt of Glasgow City Council grant funding totalling £1,500 towards the costs of Bungo in the Back Lane in June 2023, plus the outstanding balance of the Glasgow City Council Private Lane Improvement Fund grant of £20,000 towards improvement works in the Back Lanes. When these two items are stripped out, the Society's unrestricted funds decreased by £368 over the financial year.

This reporting period covers the return of our primary fundraising event Bungo in the Back Lanes in June 2022, after a pandemic-enforced absence of 2 years. As well as making for a great day, income from the event made a valuable contribution to society funds. We also saw the return of Window Wanderland in February 2023. Both of these events benefitted from Glasgow City Council Area Partnership funding, whilst Window Wanderland received an additional grant from Southside Housing Association.

In March 2022 the Society submitted an application to the Glasgow City Council Private Lane Improvement Fund for £20,000 with the intention of repairing several of the most badly degraded sections of lane in the area. This application was ultimately successful, with the funds received in June 2022. Thereafter followed extensive efforts to engage a contractor, revise and finalise costs, and apply for permissions. As at the end of the financial year on 30 April 2023, work was scheduled to commence on the lanes during June 2023.

As with so many things, the Society has seen an increase in costs due to inflation, most notably on printing for the newsletter. Following a particularly gusty Bungo in the Back Lanes event in June 2022, it was decided to purchase a replacement for one of our large gazebos, as well as spending on gorilla tape for running repairs on a few more!

The Society continues to rely on voluntary donations via its "Friends of Strathbungo" scheme. This helps to provide self-generated funds for the Society and to enable it to fund its activities and publication of The Strathbungo News. Donations from Friends for this year were £791, a small decrease on the previous year. Almost all our Friends have been so for years and only stop paying when they leave the area or pass away. The Trustees continue to wish to see voluntary giving to the Society extended, and we would like to encourage people to join the Friends scheme. Details of how to do so are available on our website at <https://bungoblog.com/strathbungo-society/friends-of-strathbungo/>.

As at 30 April 2023, the Society had unrestricted funds in hand of £5,593.

Steven Good, Treasurer