BATHGATE PROCESSION
& COMMUNITY FESTIVAL CIC

22nd May - 6th June









PROGRAMME OF EVENTS
2026 EDITION

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Welcome to the 2026 Bathgate Procession and Community Festival Programme of events.

This year we're honoured to be hosting a visiting band from Germany, bringing an international highlight to the day.

The park will be packed with activities, performances and family entertainment, reflecting the spirit and energy of our community.

We're also delighted to welcome new Committee Members whose enthusiasm is already strengthening our work and helping us to introduce a brand-new pub crawl event, adding a new twist to the celebrations while supporting local businesses.

We hope you enjoy the day. Hip Hip!



Andrew Reid
Chairperson

SECRETARY'S DETAILS
Ruby Beattie
12 Ballencrieff Mill, Bathgate, EH48 4LL
bathgateprocessionsecretary@hotmail.com

THE COMMITTEE

CHAIRPERSON
Andrew Reid
SECRETARY
Ruby Beattie
TREASURER
Niall Bell
MINUTES SECRETARY
Lesley Semple
ARCH
Rachael Hossack
Catherine Gegan
FESTIVAL FORTNIGHT
Dorthe Davidson
FUNDRAISING
Lesley Semple
Alana Frame
Claire Frame
Margaret King
Kelsey McMorran
Alan Segrott
Sonia Segrott
Tamas Szabics
MEDIA
Nicole Evry
Lesley Semple
Steven Orrell
Andrew Reid
PAGEANT
Karen Redmond
Anne Sangster
Harry Cartmill
PARK & ENTERTAINMENT
Ruby Beattie
Lesley McGiffen
PROCESSION
Nicole Evry
Catherine Gegan
Kirsty Petrie
Andrew Reid

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Community
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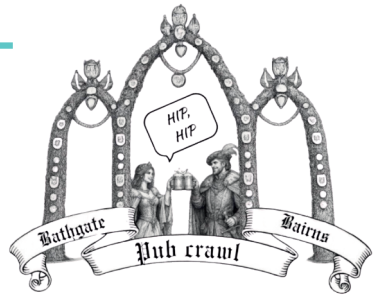
BATHGATE'S FIRST OFFICIAL PUB CRAWL

We are excited to introduce the **Bathgate Pub Crawl** as part of this year's Festival Fortnight - a fun and social way to explore some of the town's favourite venues. Participants will follow a set route through local pubs, enjoying great company, a lively atmosphere and a fantastic night out in the heart of the community.



Entry is just £5, and those who complete the crawl will receive a prize. Whether you're taking part with friends or meeting new faces along the way, it's a brilliant addition to the celebrations.

Tickets and full event details are available online and must be booked in advance. https://bookwhen.com/bathgateprocession

Note: Please drink responsibly, soft drinks allowed



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FESTIVAL FORTNIGHT 2026

Join us for some fun on the run up to the Procession day itself

MAY

Friday 22nd

Scooter Racing

6:30pm
Tesco Car Park, Bathgate

Open to pre school, primary, participants with a disability (under 8 and under 12) and adults! Bring your scooter and safety gear and compete for the winners trophy!

Sponsored by:
Splat messy play
in conjunction with TESCO

Saturday 23rd

Mile of Pennies and Street Fayre

10am till 2pm
George Street, Bathgate

Add your pounds and pennies to outline the iconic arch and help us reach our fundraising target. Join in our street fayre with a wide range of stalls and attractions!

If you'd like a stall, please contact:
bathgateprocessionsecretary@hotmail.com

Big Bathgate Busk

10am till 2pm
George Street, Bathgate

Welcome back to The Big Bathgate Busk!

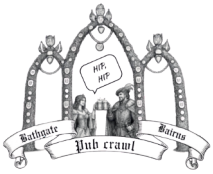
Come and see local artists showcasing their musical talents.

In association with:
Wall to Wall Music

29th - 31st

Pub Crawl

Weekend 2
Throughout Bathgate



Details on Page 5

Sunday 31st

5-A-Side Inter School Football

1pm
Bathgate Sports Centre

Open to all primary school age children who live in Bathgate or attend a Bathgate school. Teams will compete for the winners trophy!

In association with
Bathgate Thistle Community Football Club

JUNE

Tuesday 2nd

Childrens Sports

6:30pm
Bathgate Sports Centre

The details for this one are so big they need a page of their own!

Full details can be found on page 9.

Sponsored by BATHGATE COMMUNITY CENTRE

in association with

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FESTIVAL FORTNIGHT 2026

Sunday 24th

Car Treasure Hunt

2pm
Morrisons Car Park, Bathgate

Can you solve the clues and get back safely to base? Prizes awarded for 1st, 2nd & 3rd place.
Register at gazebo in Morrisons car park.
Entry fee is £10 per car.

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Monday 25th

Inter School Potted Sports

6:30pm
Jim Walker Partnership Centre

Bathgate's six primary schools compete for "The Procession Trophy".

Sponsored by SiBCAS
In association with Xcite Bathgate

Wednesday 27th

Inter School Swimming Gala

6:15pm
Bathgate Sports Centre

Come along and cheer on the swimmers.

In association with **Bathgate Amateur Swimming Club**

Wednesday 3rd

Trivia Quiz

7pm
Bathgate British Legion

£10 entry per team (max 5 people). Who will win the coveted 2026 trophy? Please see bookwhen.com/bathgateprocession to register or email our secretary (details page 3).

Sponsored by **Maureen Hamilton**
in association with Bathgate

Friday 5th

Oration Night

8pm
Bathgate Parish Church

Tom McManus will deliver his Oration covering his memories of Bathgate.
More details can be found on Page 16.

Saturday 6th

Procession Day

8am till 5:30pm

Hip Hip!

Join us for Procession Day.

Timetable of events on page 19.

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BATHGATE COMMUNITY CENTRE

CHILDREN'S SPORTS PROGRAMME 2026

BATHGATE COMMUNITY CENTRE

The children's sports event is sponsored by Bathgate Community Centre Management Committee

Monetary prizes will be given for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places. All children who take part will receive a prize.

Order of events - from 6:30pm on Tuesday 2nd June @ 3G Pitch, Xcite

GIRLS	DISTANCE	BOYS
Flat Race under 5yrs	25m	Flat Race under 5yrs
Flat Race age 5	50m	Flat Race age 5
Flat Race age 6	50m	Flat Race age 6
Flat Race age 7	50m	Flat Race age 7
Flat Race age 8	50m	Flat Race age 8
Flat Race age 9	50m	Flat Race age 9
Flat Race age 10	50m	Flat Race age 10
Flat Race age 11	50m	Flat Race age 11
Flat Race age 12	100m	Flat Race age 12
Flat Race age 13&14	100m	Flat Race age 13&14
PWD* under 10	50m	PWD* under 10
PWD* age 10-14	50m	PWD* age 10-14
Wheelbarrow Race age 7&8	50m	Wheelbarrow Race age 7&8
Wheelbarrow Race age 9&10	50m	Wheelbarrow Race age 9&10
Wheelbarrow Race age 11&12	50m	Wheelbarrow Race age 11&12
Wheelbarrow Race age 13&14	50m	Wheelbarrow Race age 13&14
Boot and Shoe Race age 7&8	50m	Boot and Shoe Race age 7&8
Boot and Shoe Race age 9&10	50m	Boot and Shoe Race age 9&10
Boot and Shoe Race age 11&12	50m	Boot and Shoe Race age 11&12
Boot and Shoe Race age 13&14	50m	Boot and Shoe Race age 13&14
Three Legged Race age 7&8	50m	Three Legged Race age 7&8
Three Legged Race age 9&10	50m	Three Legged Race age 9&10
Three Legged Race age 11&12	50m	Three Legged Race age 11&12
Three Legged Race age 13&14	50m	Three Legged Race age 13&14
Ladies 16 years and over	100m	Mens 16 years and over
Ladies 50 plus	50m	Mens 50 plus
Distance under 9yrs	1 x lap	Distance under 9yrs
Distance age 9 to 12yrs	2 x laps	Distance age 9 to 12yrs
Distance age 13 to 15yrs	3 x laps	Distance age 13 to 15yrs

* Participant With Disability

All participants must compete in their own age group. Anyone competing in the wrong age group will be disqualified. All participants must be a Bathgate resident or attend a Bathgate school.

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WELCOME TO OUR VISITING BAND

The Fanfaren-Korps Neheim-Husten is a band from Hochsauerland in Germany, a region that has been twinned with West Lothian since 1972. The band last played at Bathgate Procession in 2008.

In 1988, Kirkton Brass Bathgate made its first overseas trip to Hochsauerland, forming links with the Fanfaren-Korps Neheim-Hüsten and establishing a partnership in 1989. Both bands have enjoyed regular exchange visits, most recently Kirkton Brass visited Germany in July 2025, with the Fanfaren-Korps set to visit Scotland in June 2026.



The Fanfaren-Korps Neheim-Hüsten e.V. was founded in 1956 and has a long and vibrant history. This year, the band is celebrating their 70th anniversary – seven decades filled with music, camaraderie, and a strong commitment to tradition. Their greatest passion is traditional fanfare music. Using trumpets and drums, the band bring the distinctive sound of historic fanfare ensembles to both concerts and parades. They also include flag twirlers, whose performances add a colourful and impressive visual element. A special feature of the band is the Landsknecht uniform, proudly worn by their members which reflects the historical roots of fanfare music.

President of the Fanfaren-Korps, Vanessa Ruchardt said: "A highlight of our international connections is our partnership with Kirkton Brass Bathgate, established in 1989. This collaboration stands for musical exchange, mutual visits and a friendship that extends far beyond national borders. We are looking forward to taking part in the Bathgate Procession this year. Since 1956, the Fanfaren-Korps Neheim-Hüsten has represented tradition, community and the joy of music – and we look forward to continuing this story for many years to come."

THE 2026 PROCESSION BANDS

Bathgate Band	Noise Committee	Rollin Drones
Fanfare-Korps Neheim-Hüsten	Northern Area Sea Cadets Band	Lanark & District Pipe Band
Kirkton Brass Band	Whitburn Band	Sambalistic
Peoples Ford Bathgate & Boghall Caledonia Pipe Band (& Junior)		
The Cooperation Band		

This years bands are sponsored by:

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Tom McManus
2026 Orator

A LIFETIME OF EDUCATION



Tom was born in Bathgate in 1956, the youngest of the family with four older brothers and a sister; he was brought up in Belvedere and has lived most of his life in the town. He attended St Mary's Primary School and St Mary's Academy and while at primary school he had his first official involvement in the Galaday as a seven year old when he was chosen to be a Page Boy!

On leaving school he completed an engineering apprenticeship with a local company, Arthur Engineering who were based in the Whitehill industrial estate before spending a few years gaining experience working for other local engineering companies.

In 1979 he began his career as a lecturer in the engineering department at West Lothian College, then based in Marjoribanks Street in Bathgate, teaching welding and fabrication.

He remained at the College until 1996 when he moved to Edinburgh's Telford College, initially as a senior lecturer in Engineering before becoming Head of Construction and Engineering and eventually taking up the post of Assistant Principal.

On leaving Telford he joined The Cyrenians charity as Learning and Work manager based in the Craigmillar and Niddrie areas of Edinburgh working with long term unemployed people assisting them into work or training opportunities.

He then went on to become the Scottish manager of the building services industry employers training body. Tom returned to the College Sector for a few years as an assessor at Edinburgh college in Dalkeith, a role which involved visiting and assessing engineering students in their workplaces across Central Scotland and the Borders before retiring in 2019.

After retiring, Tom continued his interest in education by completing his second Open University degree in history, one of his main interests.

Since retiring, he has also been involved with a small group of volunteers in setting up the Armadale and Blackridge Community Foodbank, which

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currently operates out of the Armadale Partnership Centre where he still volunteers and acts as treasurer.

He is also a keen football fan, regularly attending both men's games and accompanying his wife to women's games. He also tries to keep fit by attending the gym regularly and enjoys running.

He is a keen reader, particularly history related books and along with his wife enjoys travelling, having visited such diverse places as Alaska and South Africa in the last few years and they are now looking for other locations to add to their bucket list.

He has been married to his wife Jeanette for 46 years and they have two daughters, Eilidh and Jennifer, and two grandsons, Andrew and Christopher as well as a Border Terrier called Bear.

He wishes everyone a very happy and enjoyable Bathgate Galaday 2026!

Tom will deliver his oration on Friday 5th June, 8pm at Bathgate Parish Church. All are welcome to attend.

COMMUNITY AWARDS

The community awards are presented at the Oration. We ask for nominations on our Facebook page, so if you missed your chance to nominate this year, remember to keep your eye out for next year.

www.facebook.com/bathgateprocession

JOHN HUNTER MEMORIAL AWARD

Presented to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution towards the betterment of the community.

WINNER 2025
Margaret Brady

JOHN HARDY MEMORIAL AWARD

Presented to a young person, 18 years or under who has made an outstanding contribution towards the betterment of the community.

WINNER 2025
Lewis Dickie

JIM WALKER MEMORIAL AWARD

Presented to a group who have made an outstanding contribution towards the betterment of the community.

WINNER 2025
Granny Helpers of St Mary's



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2026 PROCESSION DAY

SATURDAY 6TH JUNE

Competitions sponsored by gfgarden services

Procession sponsored by D. & J. SIBBALD

8:00am Judging of decorated houses
Both houses and frontages will be judged. More details on page 21

10:00am Judging of decorated floats
One entrant from each vehicle must report to the trophy table on Marjoribanks Street, near the corner of Academy Place

10:30am Judging of decorated bicycles & fancy dress
Entrants must report to the trophy table on Marjoribanks Street, near the corner of Academy Place

11:00am Principal characters parade
Parade starts from the EU Church and Scout Hall to the Old Academy

11:15am Historical pageant
Join us in front of the Old Academy to watch our children do us proud

12:00pm The Procession
Leaves the Old Academy and parades the town by way of:
Marjoribanks Street, Drumcross Road, Torphichen Street, Waverley Street, Livery Street, George Street, South Bridge Street and Glasgow Road

1:15pm Procession arrives at Meadow Park

1:30pm The Procession Park Festival

5:00pm Massed bands parade
Parade commences from Meadow Park to George Street

Why is there an envelope in the magazine?

If you missed our door-to-door fundraising, here's your chance to do your bit and bring back the Procession next year. Every donation, no matter how small, helps make it happen!

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DECORATION & FANCY DRESS COMPETITIONS

We hold three competitions on the day of the procession.

Advanced notification of entry is required for both decorated vehicles and premises.

Please contact **bathgateprocessioncoordinator@gmail.com** no later than 24th May with your details. Any judging criteria will be sent with your confirmation email.

THANK YOU OUR COMPETITION SPONSOR

gfgarden services

DECORATED PREMISES

Judging commences at 8am Saturday 6th June, winner announced on Facebook & prizes delivered

GROUP 1 - TRADITIONAL DECORATED HOUSE

Ian Hossack Memorial Trophy

Must include a spruced arch and window frames, decorated traditionally using crepe paper. Garden decoration is allowed but earns no additional points. Designs on the building or garage may earn points if made traditionally; otherwise, no points will be awarded. This also applies to bunting. Email for more details.

Prizes 1st - Trophy & £50 2nd - £30 3rd - £20

GROUP 2 - DECORATED HOUSE

The form of decoration is entirely open (any material is valid). The only limit is your imagination.

Prizes 1st - Trophy & £25 2nd - £20 3rd - £15

GROUP 3 - DECORATED BUSINESS PREMISES

This competition is open to all types of business premise irrespective of the type of decoration used. This one is just for fun and the glory of being in the top three!

Prizes 1st - Trophy & Certificate 2nd & 3rd - Certificate

DECORATED VEHICLES

Judging will commence 10am on Sat 6th June

SCHOOL FLOATS

Top 3 win a trophy & cash prize

1st Prize £100 2nd Prize £50 3rd Prize £25

ALL OTHER MOTOR VEHICLES

Top 3 win a trophy & cash prize

1st Prize £75 2nd Prize £30 3rd Prize £20

MOST ENTERTAINING

Overall winner receives a trophy

JUNIOR ARTWORK

Overall winner receives a trophy

FANCY DRESS & NON MOTOR VEHICLES

Judging will commence 10:30am on Sat 6th June

FANCY DRESS - INDIVIDUAL - UNDER 12

Any child under 12 from Bathgate can enter

1st Prize £20 2nd Prize £15 3rd Prize £10

FANCY DRESS - INDIVIDUAL - 12 & OVER

12 years & over from Bathgate can enter

1st Prize £20 2nd Prize £15 3rd Prize £10

FANCY DRESS - GROUPS

2+ people with the same theme / costume

1st Prize £30 2nd Prize £20 3rd Prize £15

DECORATED NON MOTOR VEHICLES

Such as handcarts, prams & bicycles

1st Prize £35 2nd Prize £25 3rd Prize £15

Judging will be carried out by independent judges and their decision is final. The Procession Committee have no influence on the results.

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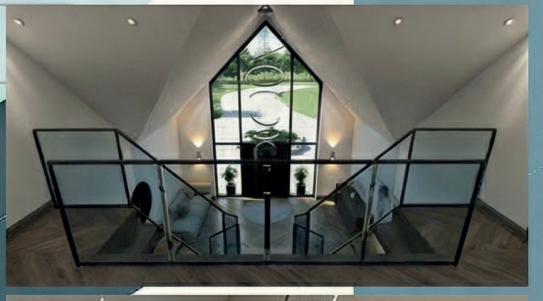
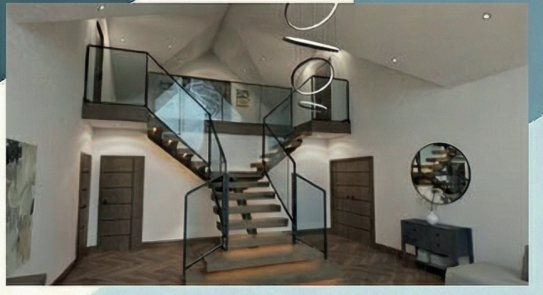
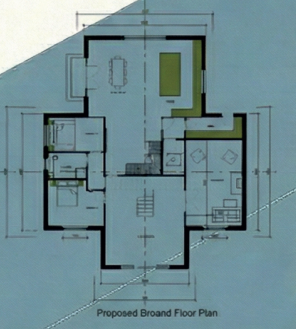
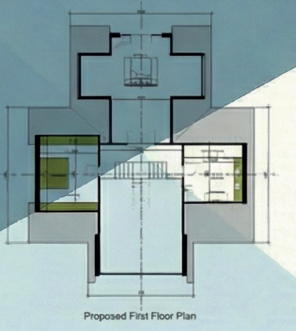






Proposed Broand Floor Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan

Services:

- New Builds
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50p to attend. Children must be registered. Tuck Shop available

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JULY 31st	Dance through the Decades	A night of music and memories. Songs from across the decades and memories shared. Dressing up optional.
SEPTEMBER 25th	Take your Pick	Join us for a night of games and prizes as we copy the game show and give you a chance to take your pick.
OCTOBER 31st	Halloween Party	Dress up or stay casual but join us for a Halloween party. Please note this event allows children from primary 6 to attend.
DECEMBER 19th	Pensioner Dinner & Dance	This is for pensioners only. A set dinner followed by live music.

We provide weekly clubs for the elderly. Wednesday 1pm - Coffee & chat. Thursday 1pm - Biscuit Bingo.



SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to every member of the Committee for their commitment throughout the year.

To those who have stayed on, your continuity, experience and steady support has been invaluable. To those who have recently come on board, thank you for bringing fresh energy, ideas and enthusiasm as our programme continues to evolve.

This year we've introduced several new events, including Santa Story Time, an Easter fundraiser and our brand-new Pub Crawl. Each one has helped strengthen community engagement and raise vital funds.

None of this would be possible without the wider community, whose generosity, creativity and willingness to attend and host events with donations, continues to inspire us.

Your support ensures the Procession and Festival remain a cherished tradition for everyone in Bathgate.



The Procession Arch Colouring Competition

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Turn your creativity into a work of art for a chance to win £50 and see your artwork featured in the 2027 Bathgate Procession and Community Festival Brochure.

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The top 3 entries for each category will appear on the Facebook page week commencing 25th May

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The overall winner will also have their artwork featured in next year's procession brochure!

***Terms and conditions apply – all entries must be returned to your school or Turpie & Co by 20th May**

2025 Winners

Category 1 and Overall Winner - Annicia Hawkes





Category 2 Winner - Thea Storrie





Category 3 Winner - Ivy Gray





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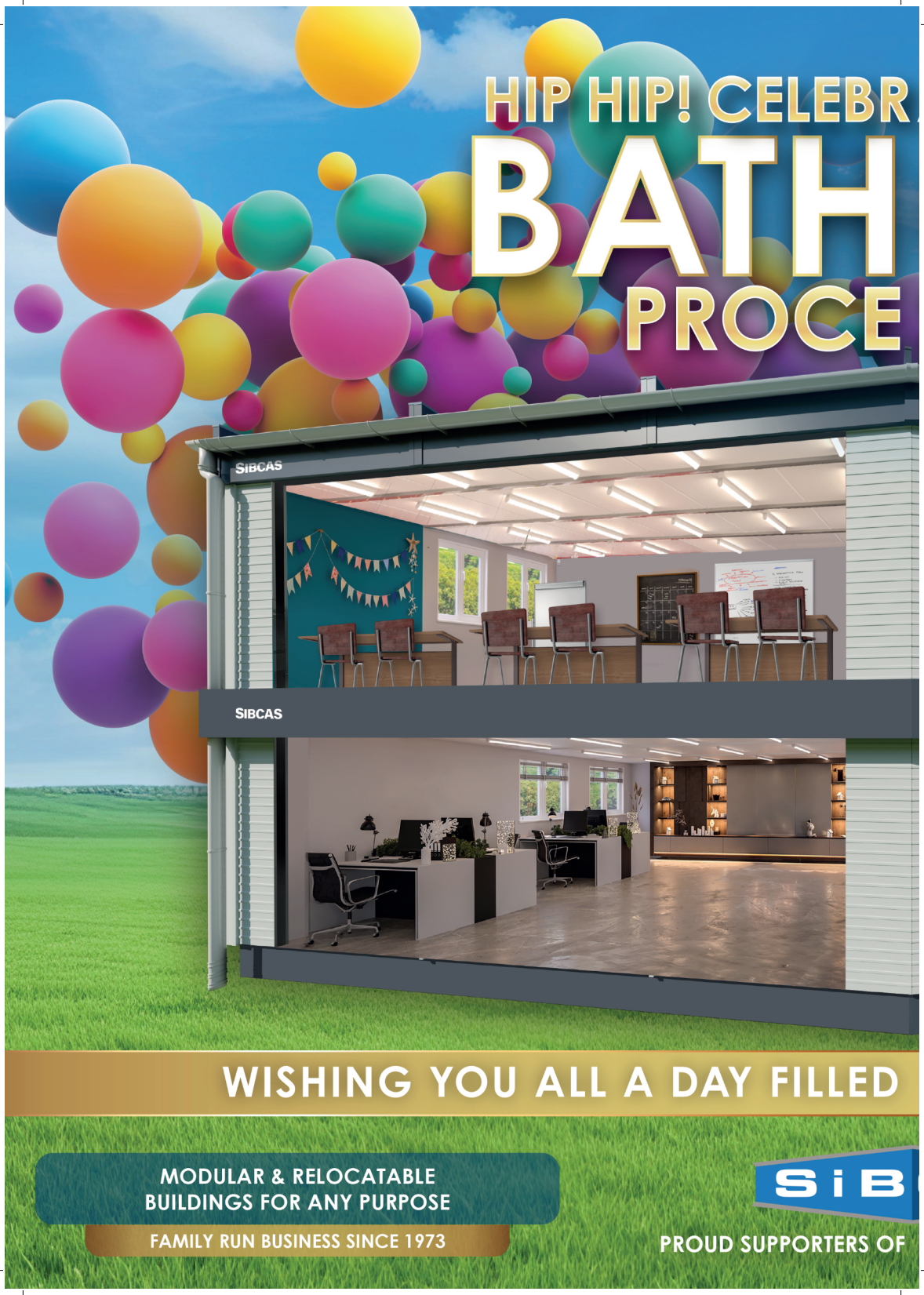
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THE EARLY YEARS



An early photograph, Jarvey Street 1896. Note the pavement arch in the background

Arch building is a Procession tradition, but how far back does it go? Newspaper reports from the early days of the Procession are available.

The first recorded arch is in the Falkirk Herald, 22nd April 1852, (the Procession was held in April until 1924). The arch is described as follows;

“Evergreens were abundantly provided for decorating the Academy. A tasteful arch was thrown over the gate”.

In 1853 and 1854, the Falkirk Herald desribes an arch at the same location.

“Early in the morning the Academy gate was surrounded by a tasteful arch of evergreens, interspersed with lilies, and other flowers of the season”. (1853)

“A graceful arch, variegated with holly and flowers of the season, was thrown over the gate”. (1854)

The Falkirk Herald of 24th April 1856 describes the first street arches.

“Graceful arches, hung with tasteful garlands, were thrown across several of the principal streets”.

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If several arches were erected in 1856, the tradition is already established. In 1903, Mr John Lawrie states "that he has supplied fir" to the Cochrane Street arch for exactly 50 years, giving the year of 1853 for the first street arch. In 1857, there is another mention of street arches.

"A number of the, young men of the place commenced to erect arches of evergreens in the various streets."

Arches were erected at Gideon Street, High Street, Main Street, Hill Street, Cochrane Street, Livery Street, Bridgend, Whitburn Road and South Bridge Street.

From 1877 onwards, the West Lothian Courier contains detailed descriptions of each arch and lists the builders. The builders experiment with a wide range of arch types, decorative styles and adornments. Until the First World War, arch numbers were in double figures most years. Typically, there would be 6 to 10 large triple span arches and additionally, smaller pavement arches. The peak year for arch numbers was 1902, with 22 arches erected.

The number of arches declined after 1920, down to 3 or 4 per year. However, decades of experience ensured that the quality of build remained exemplary. A big factor in the decline was the concreting and tarring of roads and pavements.

Since the first arch of 1852, at least 636 arches have been recorded, an impressive number! Despite occasional setbacks when no arches were erected, the tradition has survived the massive changes that 175 years of history have wrought. Undoubtedly there will be setbacks to come, but Bathgate Bairns will ensure that arches are a feature of the Processions of the future!



A classic arch, High Street 1924, winner of the Livingstone Cup

Article written by
Colin Peacock

Thank you to Link, Curb, Saltire & Jewsons for their continued support with Procession arch for 2026

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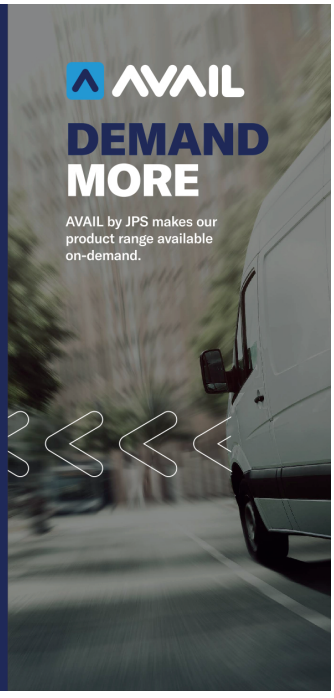

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At 11am on the steps of the Old Academy, Bathgate bairns come together to re-enact a significant event in our history. With the exception of Robert The Bruce, children of primary and secondary school age who attend a Bathgate school or live in Bathgate are invited to take part in the pageant.

King Robert the Bruce's eldest child, Marjorie was married to Walter Lord High Steward and part of the dowry included the Barony of Bathgate and the Key to Bathgate Castle. The castle was in the grounds of today's Bathgate Golf club, but unfortunately there are no upstanding remains.

For more details on the re-enactment, please see our website www.bathgateprocession.com/pageant

SCAN ME

HALBERDIER: Harry Cartmill

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS

King Robert The Bruce	Alistair Mackie
Princess Marjorie	Morgan McCormack
Walter Lord High Steward	Ben Petrie
Ladies in Waiting	Celise Macrae
	Kelsey Hale
Lord Lyon	Anna Petrie
Earl of Moray	Hunter Ackhurst
Rainbow Queen	Lily Ackhurst
Flower Queen	Abigail Whittlestone
Lady of the Court	Leah MacLean
Keeper of the Keys	Noah Gardner
Abbot of Holyrood	Craig Macrae
Heralds	Orla Robertson
	Malcolm McCauley
Page Boys	Smith McDonnell
	Jack Turberfield
Captain of the Guard	Oscar Smith



PRIMARY SCHOOL CHARACTERS

Bower Girls

Orlaith McGlinchey	Evie	Ellen Patten
Errin Hanley	Abigail Mcphillips	Aayla Wood
Cameron Reid	Aria Gilhooley	Olivia Main
Ellie Gillan	Hayley Merrylees	

Flower Girls

Ellis-Ivy Philip	Nina McKeigue	Ellie Duff
Aaliyah	Orla Welsh	Aaliyah Jamieson
Freya Dow	Hollie Mcmichael	Klara Nowak
Natalia Newlands	Riley Hogg	Ellie Mclaughlin
Amelia Brown	Lucy Colt	Hollie Hadden
Grace Drummond	Aryana	Eve Stenhouse
Bonnie Delaney	Lexi Hannigan	Remi Burton
Harley Rankine	Poppy Sullivan	Raighan Peden
Arianna Meiklem	Sophia Meiklem	

Rainbow Girls

Lucy Gillan	Olivia Emma Walker	Ella
Lucy	Isla	Maeve Szabics
Alba Cameron-Holton	Cerys Wood	Lucy-Ann McLeary
Elsie Robertson	Antonina	Bonnie Brown
Eva Shepherd	Ella Graham	Lily-Rose Chetkowska
Leah Morris	Bobbi-Lou Sherry	Ruby Taylor
River Westwood	Hania Anis	Lyla anne Livingstone
Ella Kirkbride	Ellis Wood	

Royal Guard

Maxwell Davidson	Arran Scott	Orlaith
Angus	Kayla Brown	Skye Christie
Alexander Mitchell	Levi Russell	Jamie Yuill
Peter McAllister	Alexandros Lace	Tilly Rose Campbell
Arthur Adedero	Cillian Brown	Alexander Marthon
Molly Finlay	Lewis Shannon	Alexander McAllister
Tyler McMillan	Luisa	Milan Shona Hlatshwayo

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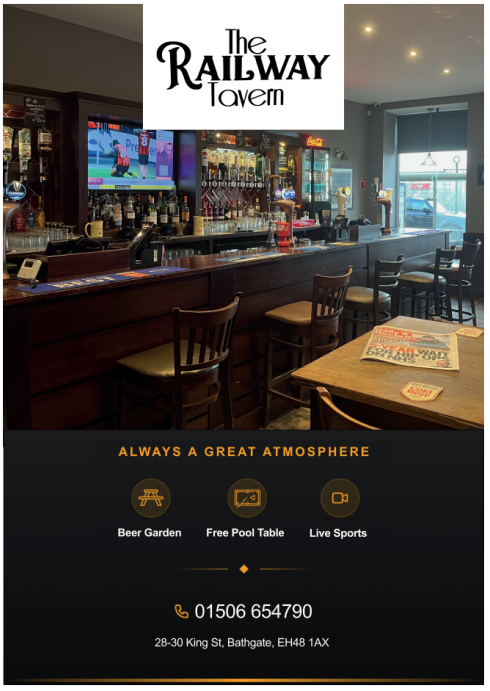

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CELEBRATING BATHGATE'S FOOTBALLING HISTORY

As we look forward to the 2026 World Cup Finals in the USA this Summer with many cheering on our gallant Scottish Team I thought it might be of interest to many of you Bathgate Bairns (native and adopted) to read some highlights of Bathgate's footballing heritage.

The first recorded football match was reported in the West Lothian Courier in April 1879 when "the Bathgate Team" played a match at an unspecified location but "victory fell to the strangers from Clarkston by four goals to none".

Over the next decade football blossomed in Bathgate with several clubs being formed – The Volunteers, Durhamtoun Rangers, Bathgate Athletic, West Lothian Thistle and Bathgate Rovers – the last named being the most successful defeating Falkirk in the 1891 /92 Scottish Cup.

In July 1893, in an attempt to pool limited resources, a Public Meeting was called and from there Bathgate Football Club was formed - their ground (Mill Park) was located between where Waverley Street and Cochrane Street were later built, with the half way line interestingly almost exactly where Marmion Road now stands. Maroon was chosen as the club colour and this club lasted for over 40 years enjoying some success, climaxing in them winning the 1908 Scottish Union League title. Incredibly, gates of over 5000 spectators were the norm with a record attendance of 10000 in a match against Falkirk in 1921.





Bathgate Football Club also played at Hampden Park in 1923 in front of a crowd of over 60000 in a Scottish Cup Tie with the Bathgate players being presented to the Duke of York (the future King George VI father of Queen Elizabeth) George VI had, of course, a Bathgate street named in his honour after the Coronation in 1937.

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Over the next ten years – and for various reasons – Bathgate Football Club declined irretrievably. The next major development in Bathgate's football chronology is the formation of Bathgate Thistle Junior Football Club in 1936 and with the Mill Park lease now gone, a new ground was found where the Club plays to this day – Creamery Park located in Hardhill Road.

Bathgate Thistle have made our town proud on many occasions, winning divisional titles and regional cups such as the St Michael Cup. Their crowning glory was winning the ultimate Junior Football Club trophy – the Scottish Junior Cup when they defeated Cumnock Juniors 2-1 at Rugby Park in Kilmarnock in 2008. As an aside yours truly was there and walking to the ground was like walking down Hopetoun Street in Bathgate with the amount of Bathgate Bairns present to cheer our team on!



Many talented football players originated from Bathgate and achieved much in senior football. Playing in the 1954 Bathgate Thistle side was Billy Ritchie (later Rangers goalkeeper), Jimmy Mann (Sunderland), Joe Digham (Wrexham), Jock Neil (Rangers) and David Ferguson (Coventry City).

Other notables from Bathgate include Alex Mathie (Celtic), Tommy Gibb who was on the Fairs Cup winning side with Newcastle, William Feerick, James Cringham and in more recent years Keegan Parker, goalkeeper Rohan Ferguson and current Exeter City FC defender Jack McMillan.

As you can see our humble town has a rich footballing heritage – I could have written so much more but I hope you enjoyed this snapshot of football in Bathgate.

Article written by
Harry Cartmill

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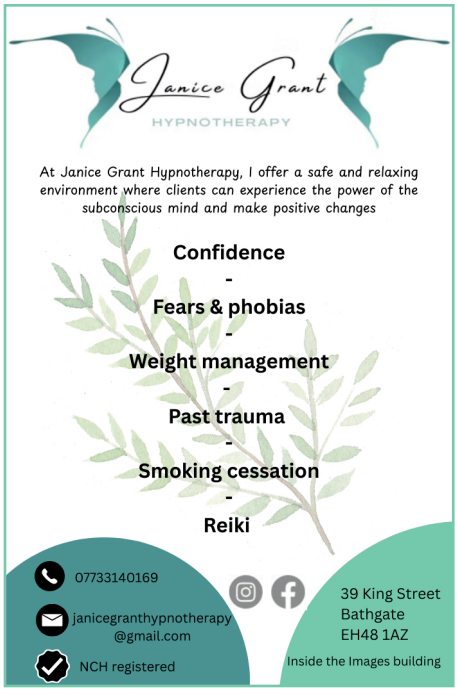
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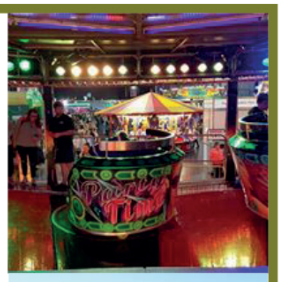

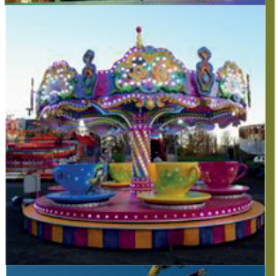

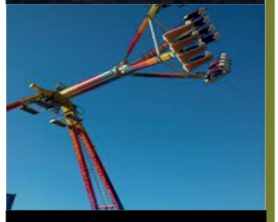

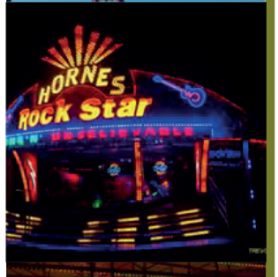



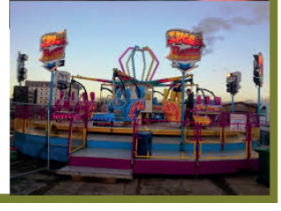

SiBCAS Park Festival 2026

We hope you are all looking forward to the SiBCAS Park Festival 2026. We'd like to thank SiBCAS once again for their overall park sponsorship.

We have lots going on in Meadow Park this year, with some new faces and a return for some of our previous acts.

Come along and enjoy the afternoon, there is truly something for everyone.

Hip Hip, have a fantastic Procession day!

Ruby Beattie
Park Convenor





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PROCESSION PARK FESTIVAL 2026

SOLAR CENTRAL SCOTLAND ARENA

Vander Double Wheel

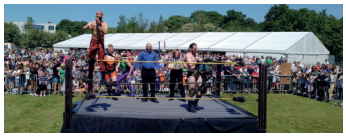
1:45pm, 2:45pm & 3:45pm (15mins)

Watch the Vander Brothers double wheel and be mesmerised as they perform their stunts over 35ft in the air.



W3L Wrestling

1:30pm, 2:00pm, 2.30pm, 3.00pm & 3:30pm (15mins)



Body slams, flying elbows and action packed wrestling bouts come to Bathgate! Watch the matches then 'meet and greet' the World Wide Wrestling League stars.

Climbing Wall Scotland

All Day

Back by popular demand, a state of the art mobile climbing wall suitable for children and adults.

Pitch Parade

NEW FOR 2026!

All Day



Freestyle football performances and skills workshops, football darts and speed cage/penalty shootout. Just what we need in the run up to the World Cup!

Sponsored by: Property Connections

The Bands

4.00pm, 4.15pm and 4.30pm

Join us for short performances from

Sponsored by Turpie &Co

Taylor Wimpey is pleased to support the Bathgate Procession 2026



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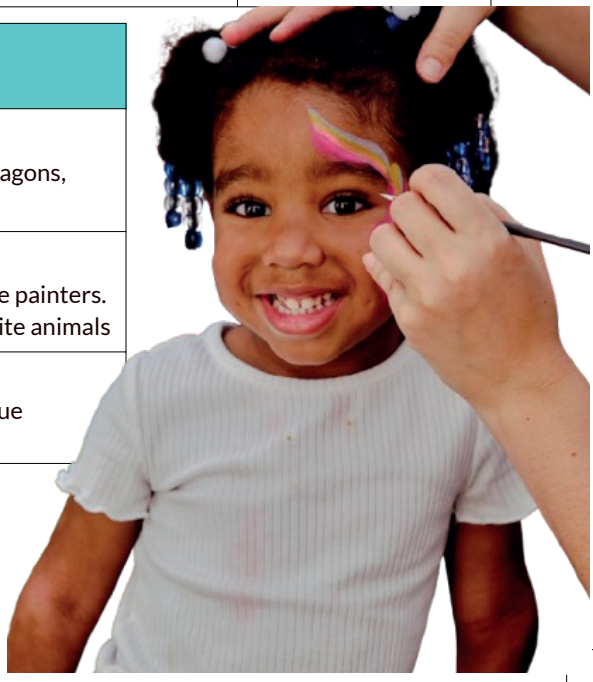
PROCESSION PARK FESTIVAL 2026



FAMILY ZONE & TAYLOR WIMPEY CHILDREN'S MARQUEE

Scheduled Performances Free performances in or around the children's marquee	
Alexander The Great Alexander the Great brings us a show full of magic and balloon modelling	**1.30pm - 2.00pm** **2:30pm - 3.00pm**
Dragonbreath Entertainment Adam thrills with a spectacular display with flames flowing from his mouth! NEW FOR 2026!	**2.00pm - 2.15pm** **2.45pm - 3.00pm** **3.30pm - 3.45pm**
Van Buren Magic Show World performing Magician and circus workshop Sponsored by The Conveyancing Practice	**2.15pm - 2.45pm** **3.15pm - 3.45pm** **4.15pm - 4.45pm**
Poppy Bubbles Bubble filled adventures that will be sure to captivate your little ones	**3.30pm - 4.30pm**

Drop In Activities (All Day) Free - donations on the day are welcome
Reptizoo Meet the rescue animals including bearded dragons, snakes and chameleon
Face Painting by Catrina Celebrate the day with our award winning face painters. Take inspiration from Reptizoo or your favourite animals
Urban Circus From procession to park, Urban Circus continue to entertain!



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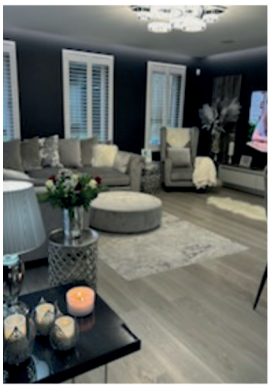
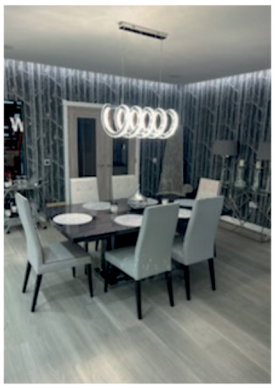



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