



Bongo fury

The Bongo-Freda Owners' Club



*Wake up to a
different view
every day*

www.bongofury.co.uk

December 2024

Newsletter

Edition No 85

SPEED!



Phil from **Japanese Auto Locators (JAL)** has been in touch to tell us about their plans to beat the land speed record for a campervan. JAL have for many years been supplying and converting Mazda Bongos but they also sell other "grey imports" and the record attempt will be made in a souped-up 500 bhp Honda Stepwagon. According to the Guinness Book of Records the current record is 141.3 mph (227 km/h) in a converted Fiat Diablo on 21/10/14. Phil and his team are aiming for 175 mph in a fully kitted-out Stepwagon with elevating roof and side kitchen unit. For the latest news on the attempt see www.jalimports.co.uk. Which begs the question, what is the fastest verified speed for a Bongo? And what other records are held by Bongo owners? See page 3 for the details.

Meetings update: As you will probably know, I asked for people to step forward to help me with the organisation of club meetings from 2025. So a very big thank you to **Stuart** and **Bobby** for helping out and, to help celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Bongo, **Rebecca McKay**. I will still be taking bookings for the meetings in Norfolk (August) and Cornwall (September) but for other events revised arrangements apply. See page 4 for more information.

Finally, a brief word about club membership. Mazda stopped making our Bongos 20 years ago so it is inevitable that Bongo Fury membership numbers have steadily declined. In October and November combined we received 44 new membership applications but in the same two-month period 71 people did not renew. However, the administrative overheads, especially our utility bills, have gone up considerably so unfortunately membership fees will increase in the spring. **Web** membership will cost £18 per year, **Webplus** £22, and **Postal** £25. And, following representations, I am pleased to announce that the printed version of your quarterly newsletter will continue to be available to Webplus and Postal members.

Jan Maynard
(The Bongomaster)

Members' Fact Sheets

Here is a list of the new, amended and revised fact sheets since the last newsletter. 'Amended' means minor changes, and 'Revised' means major changes. If you send us a 2 GB USB memory stick and a First Class 'Large Letter' postage stamp we will send you the whole lot. Or we can supply them on one of our own USB sticks for £9.95.

ABS - *what is the Antilock Braking System and how do I replace the sensors? Are there cheaper alternatives?* **Amended 27/11/24**

Auto Free Top - *trouble-shooting guide for the factory-fitted elevating roof.* **Amended 25/09/24**

Rust Directory - *a list of places who will replace your sills and panels.* **Amended 09/10/24**

Thirty Years of the Mazda Bongo



On 19th April 1995 the first commercially available Mazda Bongo Friendee rolled off the production line. It was a 2-wheel drive diesel Bongo. It did not have an elevating roof. It had the chassis number SGLR-100011, so presumably there were 10 demonstration models before this. Five years ago we were due to hold the 25th anniversary celebrations but something unexpected arrived...Covid.

Next year's actual anniversary falls on Easter Saturday so put it in your diary as there will be a number of day meetings around the UK. If you would like to organise one of these then get in touch. Venues will be announced in the New Year.

Also, in mid-September, there will be a special event near Stafford organised by Becky McKay which will be open to both members and non-members. Please note that no caravans are allowed on this site and it only has basic amenities; no electric hook-ups or showers. The easiest way to book is via one of the Facebook Bongo groups or alternatively you can contact Becky direct. See page 4 for prices and contact information.



In January we will be holding a massive stock clearance sale offering **up to 25% off** many of the items in our Bongoland Shop. Full details will be on the website soon.



The longest recorded swearing session by a Bongo owner was by Peter Dullimore (aged 59) of Cirencester, England, on 6 April 2003. While trying to remove an exhaust manifold stud, Mr Dullimore grazed all his knuckles and his elbow, and then went on to swear for 11 minutes and 13 seconds without stopping or using the same swear word twice.

Mr Dullimore later made an attempt to beat his own record live on Sky TV's 'Record Busters' programme by dropping a 105 amp Bongo battery on his foot. It ended in failure when he repeated the word 'bastard' after 9 minutes and 49 seconds.

The largest bill for work that didn't need carrying out on a Bongo is £7,298.65 (including VAT) which was charged by Dave Orkney & Sons of Poole, Dorset, England, in July 2006. Calling in for a routine service on her 1997 Mazda Bongo, Mrs Alison Perry subsequently agreed to pay for, among other things, new off-side trumpets (£825), replacement of a cracked gangle pin (£950), realignment of muff tension bracket bearing (£140), a set of hexagonal tag nuts and dongle springs (£1,685) and a full set of piss-take valves (£1,060).

Mrs Perry also later discovered that the vehicle had clocked up 6,000 miles during the four weeks it had been in the garage. She also received a speeding summons from the Italian police.

The longest traffic jam caused by a Bongo driver was by Dave Cameron from the Isle of Lewis, Scotland. Setting off on a trip to the National Bongo Bash in Worcestershire in June 2007, and having previously never driven further than Stornoway, Mr Cameron stopped at traffic lights just north of Glasgow to fiddle with his SatNav system. He then sat oblivious through 217 cycles of traffic light changes, causing a traffic jam tailback to Helensburgh (17 miles) and gridlock around the Greater Strathclyde area that took police three days to clear.

When interviewed by the police, Mr Cameron said that he 'had some issues' with his SatNav system and would return to the Isle of Lewis for 'a wee bit more practise.' He never did make it to the Bongo Bash.

The most impressive display of multi-task driving in a Bongo was recorded by Mr Mark Dangerfield of Rugby, England, on 15 February 2004. Whilst driving at 92mph in freezing fog on the M6 motorway, Mr Dangerfield simultaneously shaved, ate a sandwich, dictated a letter to his secretary, read a road map, filled in an expenses claim, took his jacket off and spoke to his wife on his mobile phone.



2025 Club Meetings

4 to 6 April - Tough Northerners in the Lake District

Organised by **Stuart Coates**. Electric pitches £30 per night, non-electric £25. Deposit of 50% payable at the time of booking, balance payable 2 weeks before meeting date. Booking should be made direct with the campsite either online at www.parkfootullswater.co.uk or by phone on **01768-486309**. Mention 'Mazda Group' when you book.

NOW BOOKING

The following two meetings are organised by **Bobby Poll**. Bookings are by telephone only between 9am and 3pm on Fridays, Mondays and Tuesdays ONLY on **07920-888868**. You cannot make a booking until the date shown below. Payment is by Paypal or BACS only. Prices will be announced on the website in the New Year.

15 to 18 May 2025 - Southern Softies at Wallingford, Thames Valley

BOOKING FROM 07/02/25

18 to 23 June 2025 - UK National Bongo Bash at Stourport, Worcestershire

BOOKING FROM 14/03/25

7 to 10 August - Summer Camp in Snettisham, North Norfolk

BOOKING FROM 08/05/25 via the Bongo Fury office

19 to 21 September - Thirty Years of the Mazda Bongo, near Stafford

Organised by **Becky McKay**. Please note that no caravans are allowed on this site and it has only basic amenities, no electric hook-ups or showers. Price is £7 per adult per night, children £3 and pets £2. A non-refundable deposit is required with the rest payable on arrival. There will be live music and firepits. Email Becky on beckymac281@googlemail.com.

NOW BOOKING

25 to 29 September 2025 - Bongo Fest South West in Looe, Cornwall

BOOKING FROM 03/07/25 via the Bongo Fury office

To Contact Bongo Fury:

Office opening hours are 9.30am to 12.30pm

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday only

Tel: 0114-2550836

At all other times use email ian@bongofury.co.uk
or leave a message or text or WhatsApp on **07932-844321**

Postal address: Unit 10, Aizlewood Rd, Sheffield S8 0YX

Visitors by appointment only

(Christmas/New Year: closed from 23/12, re-open 6th January)