
23rd
Year!

Bongo
fury
Est. 2003

The Bongo-Freda Owners' Club



*Wake up to a
different view
every day*

www.bongofury.co.uk

Spring 2026

Newsletter

Edition No 90

The Muffin Men



The relationship between Frank Zappa and Don Van Vliet (aka Captain Beefheart) was notoriously fractious. Despite being former high school buddies in California they had fallen out when the Captain blamed Frank, who had produced Beefheart's "Trout Mask Replica" album, for dismal sales. But by 1975 they had become friends again which resulted in a residency at Armadillo World Headquarters in Austin, Texas. It was from these sessions that the difficult-to-find Bongo Fury album was released.

My favourite track on the album is the stunning guitar workout "Muffin Man" but it is all excellent, although an acquired taste for some.

Fast forward 28 years to 2003 and when the Mazda Bongo Owners' club was formed there could be only one choice for the name of the club and the name on our website. Bongo Fury!

A 6-CD edition featuring lots of oddities and mixing desk recordings is now available for the bargain price of £70, but not, alas, from the club shop.

Parp! Parp!

Ian Maynard
(The Real Bongomaster)

Members' Fact Sheets

We have approximately 200 fact sheets available in the members' area of the Bongo Fury website on a variety of topics ranging from the Anti-Locking Braking System to Wishbones. 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.

Audio - all about DIN plugs, wires and CD players. **Amended 14/01/26**

Cam Belt (V6) - changing the timing belt on the 2.5 litre petrol Bongo. Not for the faint-hearted!
Amended 22/03/26

Sliding Door - sometimes this can jam shut. Or open. Here's what to do. **Amended 18/03/26**

Tyres - all about sizes, load ratings and the latest recommendations. **Revised 11/02/26**

From the Bongo Clinic Archives

The Bongo Clinic on the website is where members can ask, and receive answers to, questions of a technical nature. Here's a selection of interesting ones from the past.



Q: At my MOT I was told that I need a new cross member. What exactly is a cross member?

A: A cross member is someone who receives their new membership card in the post, only to find that their name has been misspelt.

Q: Could you tell me about the clearances?

A: It was when the poor Scots were ejected from the Highlands and replaced with sheep.

Q: Sorry, I meant the valve clearances on my diesel Bongo.

A: Inlet 0.1mm +/- 0.005mm, Exhaust 0.2mm +/- 0.05mm.

Q: Is there a maximum weight limit inside the elevating roof for sleeping purposes? I weigh 15 stones and my wife about 10 (ish).

A: The official load capacity is 150kg. So it depends on how "ish" your wife is...

Q: My 1997 Freda has a full body skirt. But I ran over a dog recently and I have mashed it up. Any idea where I can get a replacement?

A: I think it will be difficult. Was it yours? If so then a replacement may be an emotional experience. However if it was just a neighbours or a stray, your best bet is to contact your local dogs home or the PDSA.

Farewell to Steve

From the very dawn of the club there has been a few dedicated professional mechanics that specialised in Bongos. One of them is **Steve Drewery** of Kings Lynn-based Outback Autos who has recently announced his retirement. I met Steve a few times and visited his Bongo yard in the North Norfolk countryside. Pictured here is his very own Bongo customised pick-up truck.

Steve will be missed by the wider Bongo community and we all wish him the very best for the future!



Tyre Recommendations 2026

Here are recommendations from www.blackcircles.com based on price, durability and positive feedback. These are for 15-inch wheels only.

Tyre Size	Type	Brand
195/70/R15	Budget	Nanking Van CW-25
	Premium	Continental Van Contact
	All Year	Hankook Vantra ST AS2
	Winter	Continental Van Contact
215/65/R15	Budget	Nakang Econex NA-1
	Premium	Continental Van Contact
	All Year	Hankook Vantra ST AS2
	Winter	Continental Van Contact
205/70/R15	Budget	Kumho KL33
	Premium	Vredestein Quatrac 5
	All Year	Yokohama Geolander GO15
	Winter	Yokohama Geolander GO15

TOTE BAGS

Tammy Baker has been in touch:

“Hello, I recently purchased a Bongo from Bongo Barn and I’m hooked! Tim suggested I get in touch as I have started making tote bags and wondered if your members would be interested. If so contact me by email at tammibaker@outlook.com”



A small selection of what is available.



2026 Club Meetings

All our events are child and dog friendly. Bookings are by telephone only on the number indicated. Full payment is required. Cancellations can be made without penalty up to 3 weeks beforehand. An information pack will be sent 2 weeks before the event.

The following two meetings are organised by club member **Bobby Poll**. Bookings are by phone only between 9am and 3pm on Fridays, Mondays and Tuesdays ONLY on **07920-888868**. You cannot make a booking until the dates shown below. Payment is by PayPal or BACS transfer only.

7 to 10 May - Southern Softies at Wallingford, Thames Valley

We have 25 pitches available all with electric hook-up at £30 per night.

NOW BOOKING

17 to 22 June - UK National Bongo Bash at Stourport, Worcestershire

We have 60 pitches available with electric hook-up at £27 per night (minimum stay of 3 nights) and 100 standard (non-electric) pitches at £20 per night.

NOW BOOKING

17 to 20 September - Bongo Fest South West in Glastonbury, Somerset

Prices to be announced.

Booking commences 9th July via the Bongo Fury office on 0114-2550836

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