



issue two

# federation news&views

the newsletter of the north lanarkshire federation

## The North Lanarkshire Federation makes Scottish history!

2008 passed quickly but not without its share of successes. The North Lanarkshire Federation of Tenants & Residents Associations has been awarded not one but two awards for its hard work on behalf of the people of North Lanarkshire.

The first award is the Council's Corporate Award for Community Safety and Development. Last year being won by the Antisocial Task Force, the Federation took this year's top award for its hard work in contributing to the council's corporate priorities and developing the community voice across North Lanarkshire. The award recognises all the hard work in developing the Federation, and the effectiveness with how it has integrated its work into council decision making processes. A truly impressive award, especially given the high standard of competition it faced this year.

The second award is even more impressive- a national award that recognises the significant contribution that the North Lanarkshire Federation has had in promoting local democracy and community planning. The prestigious Bronze Award was given by the Convention of Scotland Local Authorities (COSLA). It is an award that receives the top nominations across Scotland and given

the extensive amount of Community Planning work going on in Scotland it is a remarkable achievement for the Federation to be awarded the Bronze Award.

It is worth bearing in mind that the North Lanarkshire Federation is one of the youngest Federations in Scotland and possibly the first to obtain a COSLA. This has been achieved through the hard work of a small number of volunteers, despite having several vacancies on the committee. If you want to become more involved in the Fed there are always opportunities. Stand up and help give the people of North Lanarkshire a stronger voice.



**We hope you enjoy reading our second newsletter. We try to make it as informative and fun as possible. We have even included a puzzle page so take 5 minutes out of your busy day and relax. Its not all hard work you know! If you have any recommendations for our next newsletters then please do get in touch.**



# Consultation Corner

The Federation has actively listened to its members and taken strong action to develop better services. Through wide consultation Federation members asked the committee to prioritise Community Safety, Roads and Street Lighting and Waste Management as their top concerns. The Federation are now actively developing sub-groups in these top issues to jointly improve these important council services. November saw an open meeting with top speakers coming from different council services to share information about the current system. The sub-groups are expected to start early this year.

The Federation have also been consulting its members on four important issues: future funding for tenant and resident groups, in-kind support to tenant groups, estate walkabouts and chairpersons meetings. The council currently provide all four services to tenant groups across North Lanarkshire so the Federation wants to support these processes and ensure tenant groups get the best possible services.

## Chairpersons Meetings

Chairpersons meetings are an opportunity for all the tenant groups in one area to come together to discuss key matters of concern with Housing Services. The council are striving to hold at least four chairpersons meetings in each area of North Lanarkshire. Some Federation members had concern that the meetings could be improved and asked the committee to look into it. In response the Federation has now agreed to conduct a full review of the chairpersons meetings throughout North Lanarkshire and has already started discussions with Housing Services.

## Funding and Support for tenant groups

Funding is always an issue close to the heart of tenant groups. The Federation has therefore been working closely with the council to try and develop an improved system of funding for groups. Through running a series of workshops at this year's tenants conference the Fed started a consultation programme of consultation that discusses the advantages and disadvantages of different funding systems. These consultation events have also been supported by written consultation with tenant groups to ensure every group has an opportunity to have its say on such an important issue. Results are expected to be available towards the end of May.

In-kind support is the non-financial assistance for example photocopying, postage, advertising, hall bookings or assistance to arrange meetings. We have conducted a review on the amount of in-kind support local tenant groups get from First Stop Shops and Housing Offices. Over 40% of tenants groups and 80% of First Stop Shops responded. We've now analysed the information and a draft report is available. The report makes some interesting reading. It highlights a whole range of differences in the support being given to tenant groups with different areas having different strengths. One the strong recommendations to come out of the research is for tenant groups to

have an Annual Health Check with a Housing Officer or council representative. This health check would be an opportunity for groups to get better support and make it clear exactly what support groups are entitled to. This recommendation and others by groups are currently being discussed with the council to improve services.

## Estate Walkabouts

Last but by no means least the Fed has been working to improve tenant led inspections or estate walkabouts. Estate walkabouts are an opportunity for people involved in tenants groups to walk around their community and raise any matter of concern that they may have directly with the council. An action plan is then developed listing all the work to be done in an area- (called an EstMON 01 form). This system has been recognised as being an effective in giving people a chance to have their say about what needs to improve in their community. However there is always room for improvement. The Federation have written out to gather information from members to identify a number of ways that improvements can be made as well as discussing this recommendations with the Council.

## Improving how we feedback

All of this consultation and service improvement has been supported by significant improvements to how it communicates with its members. The Fed have been making sure that all members get some communication from the committee on a monthly basis whether this be an opportunity to come to a meeting, a newsletter or update, or a letter about something. In addition to this as part of our communication strategy we have now launched our website. The independent website is a fantastic source of independent information and has an interactive map to find out about your local tenant group, and how you can get involved. You can check out the website at [www.northlanarkshirefederation.org.uk](http://www.northlanarkshirefederation.org.uk)

# Allocation policy update article by North Lanarkshire Council

North Lanarkshire Council are currently in the final stages of implementing their new housing allocation policy which was approved by the council last year. The new policy is being introduced at the same time as the new Common Housing Register which has been developed, and will be used by 19 other Registered Social Landlords operating in the North Lanarkshire area. Within the next few weeks the council will start allocating their houses according to the rules of the new policy, using the waiting lists that are recorded on the new Common Housing Register.

The new housing allocation policy is based on a 'groups plus points' system and is a policy that aims to be fairer, to give priority to those most in housing need and to reflect best practice. In this policy all applicants will be placed in one of

four waiting lists groups and will be given points to reflect their current housing circumstances and level of housing need.

The introduction of the new Common Housing Register means that applicants will now only have to complete one application form if they wish to be considered for housing by different landlords who have housing in North Lanarkshire. It also means that applicants will have access to more detailed information and advice about their housing prospects in the areas they have requested.

To allow us to introduce the new policy and the Common Housing Register, all applicants on our housing waiting list and the partner landlords waiting lists, were issued with a new Common Housing Register application



form which they were asked to complete and return if they wanted to remain on our waiting list or

any of our partner landlord's waiting lists for housing. All applications that have been returned have now assessed under the terms of our new policy, and all applicants will be lettered within the next few weeks,

advising what waiting list they have been placed on and how many points they have received under the new policy.

Should any applicant have any enquiries about the new housing allocation policy or their application for housing you should contact your local First Stop Shop or e-mail [HousingAllocationTeam@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:HousingAllocationTeam@northlan.gov.uk)

## Launch of NLF website, November 2008

An open meeting in November last year saw the website become live. The website is a fantastic way to find out more about the tenants movement in North Lanarkshire. The event was well attended with over 45 delegates attending to celebrate the launch of the website.

The meeting also had interesting discussions on key issues raised by Andrew MacKenzie, Customer Service Manager Environmental Services and David Smart, Roads Network Operations Manager. These important services within North Lanarkshire Council have

offered senior managers to support the establishment of Federation sub-groups and act as Liaison Officers between the Federation and the Council to take up matters of importance to local groups.

**You can become involved in the Federation's Roads and Street Lighting sub-group or the Federation's Waste Management sub-group by phoning 01236 435 844 and putting your name forward.**



# Get tenants a stronger voice - using the tenant participation strategy

North Lanarkshire Council are in the process of developing a new Tenant Participation Strategy for the period 2009-2012. It will be the 3rd strategy produced and the overall aim is to enable tenants to have real opportunities to become involved in the decision making processes of Housing & Social Work Services.

The new strategy will reflect North Lanarkshire's commitment to developing effective consultation and participation and will set out what the council is planning to do, in co-operation with tenants, to enable and support tenant participation over the next 3 years.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 sets out the Statutory Right for Participation and the requirement for Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords to have a Tenant Participation Strategy in place.

The development of the new strategy is a good opportunity for tenants and other stakeholders to get more involved in their Housing Service, so tell North Lanarkshire Council what issues matter to you.

A survey has been issued to all Registered Tenants Organisations and Tenants Groups and the feedback will be used to help identify the key issues the new Tenant Participation Strategy should address.

Local groups and Registered Tenant Organisations' will also have the opportunity to have an input into the development of the new strategy via focus groups which will be conducted by North Lanarkshire Council in partnership with the Tenants Information Service (TIS).

**If you would like to comment on the current Tenant Participation Strategy 2006-2009, please contact Laura Lindsay, Communications Co-ordinator on 01698 274143 or email [Lindsayla@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:Lindsayla@northlan.gov.uk).**

It is anticipated to have a draft strategy in place by June 2008 and it will be published on the council's website [www.northlan.gov.uk](http://www.northlan.gov.uk). You may also obtain a draft copy by contacting Laura Lindsay.

All feedback received will be used to shape the final strategy so I would urge you to make your views known.



## Customer Care Service Charter, article written by NLC.

Following a comprehensive consultation process with NLC staff and the North Lanarkshire Federation of Tenants and Residents Association (Information Sub-Group) we completed a full review of the Customer Care Service Charter and a summary version was issued by the Council to all tenants in April 2008 along with the Tenant Newsletter. This Charter details the Council's service commitments to customers and outlines what service standards are expected from the Council. The aim is to ensure that all customers receive a high standard of service at all times when contacting staff and when visiting First Stop Shops or local Neighbourhood Offices. A full version of this Charter is now available at all First Stop Shops and Neighbourhood Offices and from the Tenants Federation office. A supply has also been issued to all Tenants Groups. Copies of the Charter were also distributed to all attendees at the Tenant Conference held at Airdrie Academy on Sat 8th November 2008.

**If you wish a copy of this Charter sent to your home address then please contact: Quality Management Section, Scott House, 73-77 Merry Street, Motherwell. Tel No. 01698 332782 or e-mail: [hpqualityman@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:hpqualityman@northlan.gov.uk)**

# Annual General Meeting, March 2009

The Federation held a successful Annual General Meeting. The event was well attended with over 70 delegates coming from 30 tenant groups representing a wide spectrum of areas in North Lanarkshire. The AGM accepted the resignations of all the committee members and re-elected a new committee to serve the people of North Lanarkshire. It was great to see a few new faces getting involved on the Federation committee.



## The new committee is as follows:

**Chairperson** Robert Arthur

**Vice Chairperson** Tom Hunter

**Secretary** Maureen Duggan

**Assistant Secretary** Gerry Somers

**Treasurer** Gwen McMullen

**Committee Members** Grace Westwood, John Neil & Elaine McCondochie

The AGM announced that there are still four vacancies remaining on the committee so if people are interested in becoming co-opted onto the committee then they should contact the Federation directly and notify the committee of their interest.

The event was a great opportunity for groups to meet each other and catch up on local events and activities. There was also a significant debate on two constitutional reforms that were submitted by members. Despite the proposals not being approved by a majority of members, it was good to see a healthy interest in the constitution. Members were reminded that more discussion can be taken at the constitution sub-group that the committee has been attempting to develop over the past 15 months.

So another team has been elected to serve the people of North Lanarkshire for another year. With your support this could be the most successful year to date for the Federation but to achieve this it will take support and hard work from all the Federation members getting involved in the opportunities that the committee create.



# Waste Management – article by North Lanarkshire Council

Have you noticed blue recycling containers popping up around flatted properties?

North Lanarkshire Council have recently invested £0.5 million to install 200 blue recycling Nodes in 154 sites. This will enable over 4500 tenants living in flatted properties to recycle on their door step.

Until very recently North Lanarkshire residents, who live in flats, only option for recycling was to take materials to recycling sites and centres and this often required having to travel a distance.

In response to residents requesting that recycling facilities be provided closer to home North Lanarkshire Council committed the resources required to facilitate the largest roll out of recycling to flatted properties ever in the UK.

Where recycling Nodes have been installed tenants are provided with a blue box to keep in their flat to store and transport their recycling to and from the Nodes. The blue recycling Nodes can be used to recycle: Paper; Plastic bottles and food containers; Flat and corrugated cardboard; Food and drinks cans; Textiles and Empty aerosols. Tenants are asked to rinse out cans, plastic containers and bottles to prevent smells.



Glass can also be recycled in the black glass bins located near to the blue recycling Nodes.

By introducing recycling to flatted properties North Lanarkshire Council are confident that tenants will help to further increase our recycling rate which has seen an impressive increase from 2% up to 34%, this has been in thanks to resident's commitment to the Recycle for Good scheme.

**If you would like information about the Recycle for Good scheme please visit [www.recycleforgood.gov.uk](http://www.recycleforgood.gov.uk) or contact Kirsty Allen on 01698 302042.**

The North Lanarkshire Federation is establishing a Waste Management sub-group. If you are interesting in having a voice on issues key like those raised in this article you can get involved and share your views by phoning 01236 435 844 and putting your name down on the sub-group.

We are also establishing sub-groups in Roads and Street Lighting, Community Safety and to look at our constitution. If you are interested in any of these issues you can also get involved. There is no limit on the number of sub-groups you can get involved in, all expenses are paid and meetings are arranged at whatever time suits the majority of people.

Here's a selection of photos from work we've been doing. From speaking at large events, to organising conferences, to meeting tenants groups at open meetings, and giving training and advice to groups there's a variety of things we've done below throughout the year.



# Puzzle Page

Want something to break up the day? Welcome to our puzzle page. If you have a spare ten minutes why not drain your brain and try the cryptic crossword.

## Across

3. Female quarters (5)
7. On land (6)
8. Makes up for (6)
9. Musical play (5)
12. Shroud (5)
14. Beneath (5)
15. Forgiving (9)
16. Wave (7)
17. Allowing (7)
19. Alterations (9)
22. Meant to be elected (5)
23. Biting insects (5)
24. Catches (5)
26. Emphasis (8)
27. Funded (8)
28. Santas little helpers (5)

## Down

1. Of the stars (6)
2. Columbian capital (6)
3. Saviour (4)
4. Female relative. Inf (4)
5. Adoring (6)
6. Minor (6)
10. Condition (9)
11. Turning (9)
13. Worn away (7)
14. Joining (7)
18. Morals (6)
19. Expensive car (slang) (6)
20. Grab (6)
21. Worker who tends furnace (6)
24. Fill (4)
25. Weeps (4)

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For the answers see page 12

	1		2		3				4		5		6	
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16										17				
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						28								

## Across

3. It will find you whichever way you approach (5)
7. South west township in africa (6)
8. I am two (6)
9. Cancel (5)
12. Just short of a funeral car (5)
14. Where you may find your mail (5)
15. Old, new. Same story, different book (9)
16. Tie the knot (7)
17. Sits again for snap (7)
19. STOP SHOOTING, cease fire (9)
22. Airborne warning and control system (5)
23. Not snowy but will still give you a hoot (5)
24. Relative in pain? (5)
26. Get out the flags (8)
27. Reeled in while ogling (8)
28. Well below par (5)

## Down

1. Mail for her Majesty (6)
2. Have recourse with holiday destination (6)
3. The flower awoke (4)
4. Ready after the tear (4)
5. Rush to finish (6)
6. High flying hunter (6)
10. Officer going back (9)
11. In this job it helps to be a good listener (9)
13. Feelers? (7)
14. View closely (7)
18. Down here with the bird (6)
19. Sounds like the ships company could make more (6)
20. Little Edward made a wage (6)
21. Invisible (6)
24. No tea on the table but still OK (4)
25. Get locked in the University (4)

## TIS celebrates contribution of Frances Nelson MBE

The Tenants Information Service (TIS) would like to pay tribute to Frances Nelson MBE, the Convenor of TIS who sadly passed away.

Frances joined the TIS committee in 1993 and worked tirelessly to ensure tenants have access to independent information, training and support. As the Convenor of TIS, from 2003-2009, she played a key role in developing TIS as a major contributor in its field.

Ilene Campbell, Director of TIS said: *“Frances was totally committed to improving tenant participation throughout the country. She played an active part working with the Scottish Executive to establish ‘Partners in Participation’ the first national framework for Tenant Participation in Scotland. She was very well respected both locally and nationally and will be very sadly missed.”*

Frances was also the chairperson and founder of the Dundee Federation of Tenants’ Associations. Described as *‘a formidable opponent’* and *‘a woman and a half’*.

Dundee Lord Provost, John Letford said *“a light had gone out on the city”* with her death at 76.

In honour of her memory The Tenants Information Service (TIS) is delighted to announce the introduction of the Frances Nelson MBE Award in memory of Frances Nelson MBE.

This award is being introduced in its 20th Anniversary year to commemorate the contribution that Frances made to the tenants’ movement in Dundee and throughout Scotland.

The award is open to any tenants’ or tenants’ and residents’ organisation in Scotland. The organisation should have made a positive contribution or outstanding achievement to the tenants’ movement by working to represent the views of its members.

**An information sheet and application form for the award can be downloaded from the TIS website at [www.tis.org.uk](http://www.tis.org.uk) or can be posted out on request by telephoning us on 0141 248 1242. The closing date for submissions this year is midday on May 22.**



## Office Open Day, December 2008

An office open day was held in December 08 for members of tenants and residents groups to come along, see what services the office can provide for them and have an informal chat with Federation committee members. The day was organised as a light hearted celebratory occasion, to launch its new office management policy. The policy ensures that all Federation members and tenant groups in North Lanarkshire have the same access opportunities and improves services that tenant groups can get from the office. **Groups can now use the office to get:**

- Professional information and Advice
- Use of the resource room- packed with information on a range of subjects
- Access to the internet
- Basic Printing and Photocopying
- Tea, Coffee and refreshments
- A free meeting space –day or night (needs to be booked in advance)
- A ‘care-of’ postal address (this can only be provided for new or groups struggling to meet the registration criteria on a temporary basis only)

**All these services are free of charge but must be booked in advance. This helps us coordinate what takes in the office to satisfy everyone’s requests. To book you need to call 01236 435 844 to make arrangements.**

# Federation Conference 2009: “Progressing together step by step”.

## Event Spotlight - North Lanarkshire Federation Conference 2009

**Saturday 30th May 2009**

**9am- 2:30pm, Airdrie Academy School**

The North Lanarkshire Federation strives to provide support, information and training to tenants and residents groups throughout North Lanarkshire. As a way of doing that we are very proud to announce that we are organising the first tenant led conference in North Lanarkshire.

The conference will be a fantastic chance to meet and chat with tenant groups throughout North Lanarkshire. We are organising a market place full of organisations that we think you will want to meet including funding organisations and organising a series of workshops. The workshops will include:

The new allocation policy. A step-by-step guide to getting a house in North Lanarkshire. How has the system changed and how does it work.

Getting your message across. A workshop jam packed with tools and tips to help your tenants group write newsletters, use the media and advertise your group more effectively.

Waste Management. A chance to explore the waste management system in more detail including recycling and the opportunities that tenant groups have in becoming more influential.

Estate Management. A workshop looking at how our estates are managed, including the roles and responsibilities of managing the estates, looking at what purpose an estate walkabout may play and looking at opportunities for tenant groups to influence this.

### Put this date in your diary now!

As with all Federation events, the conference is free of charge and travel expenses will be offered. If you need assistance with any mobility issues, hearing impairments, childcare assistance or any thing else please contact us as far in advance as possible so that we can arrange this for you.

### Book your place now by phoning 01236 435 844!

Raise the matter at your tenants group and ask them to send some people too! At this stage there is no limit to the number of people who can come. The more the merrier. It won't cost them a thing and will significantly assist their group to become more effective.

### Book your place now. Phone 01236 435 844!

More photos from work we've been doing. From speaking at large events, to organising conferences, to meeting tenants groups at open meetings, and giving training and advice to groups there's a variety of things we've done below throughout the year.



## **Your News** *from* **West Crindledyke Tenants & Residents Group, Newmains**

Since the inception of our group some 3 years ago we have noticed a vast difference in the way our issues are dealt with by the council.

We have managed to have 3 bus shelters erected which benefits everyone who uses public transport. This is something we never had in our area before we formed our group. We have managed to have goal posts erected on a piece of land that was lying doing nothing, which has been a great thing for the young people in our area.

Through meetings with the regeneration management we have secured the sum of £29,000 to upgrade the Creran Path area- something that has been badly needed since the demolition of the flats. We have also managed to have a new footpath put in place at the Laggan Way/Pluscarden Loan area.

These are a few of the successes that we have managed since we formed our group- things that have been needed for years and nobody seemed to listen, but now with a great deal of help from our local housing manager, Ann Djuritschek things are now being done although it will take a long time after years of neglect.

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## **Your News** *from* **Chapelhall Tenants and Residents Association, Airdrie**

We have had a whole range of successes which we'd like to share:

We got steps removed from the area. These were being used for people to meet and drink

We got CCTV cameras installed with the help our local Councillor, Tom Curley

We got a barrier put up in Lauchope St to stop motorbike fanatics using the garden area for trials.

We got dog bins put up throughout Chapelhall

We assisted two tenants get their garden fenced after waiting seven years for the work to be done. This was done with the help of Les Stalker.

We assisted a member to get trees removed as they were blocking light into his house

We got other trees and grass cut back on footpaths in Carlisle Road

We got a new bus route for the tenants and residents. The number 16 now goes to Carlisle Road and down Lancaster Avenue

We also backed the local schools games by providing medals for football, dancing and an assault course, and we will back them again next year.

Attended meetings organised by the Federation and the project.

We got a Christmas tree for the village for the first time in 5 years.

There are a lot of other things going on and we will always try to help the people of Chapelhall.

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## **Your News** *from* **Alcath Tenants & Residents Association, Newmains**

Over the past three years we have negotiated with North Lanarkshire Council to improve the area they live. Through many meetings and discussions a pathway in the Abernethyn Road area has now been completely refurbished, with new lights and an upgraded walkway plus a set of goalposts. This makes a once wasted piece of land a place that the community can use for fun days and many more activities. This now means that our kids can enjoy a safe place to play.

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Another major improvement to the area is the completion of all the new metal fencing for the tenants. This issue has been one of the main topics brought up at the associations meetings, the constant eyesores in the area of broken wooden fencing. This has made a vast improvement to the scheme.

Many more tasks have been undertaken including regular cleaning by council litter picking and sweeping. This keeps the area tidy and makes any area look better and creates a feel good factor, plus the community take pride in the area they live. Small steps leading to big results.

All of this couldn't have been achieved without the local tenants and residents association continually representing our area. Our little part of North Lanarkshire has most definitely benefited from the work of our association over the past three years. A small group of people but they make such a difference to our community with constantly thriving to keep our area clean, safe and keeping community informed on a regular basis when possible.

## **Your News** *from Craigneuk and Old Petersburn Road, Airdrie*

A fair bit of work has been done working with the community wardens cleaning up the area, new fencing has been going up, rubbish taken away and youths supervised by the police have cleaned up an area of waste ground to be made into an allotment patch. The group have also organised a successful Christmas party for everyone bringing a bit of Christmas cheer to the area. Work with the youth has also continued with the assistance of Sidekix project. The project organises dancing, games and football amongst other things on a weekly basis. We have now established our own newsletter, and released two editions to keep members informed about what's going on in our area. Things are definitely improving step by step.

## **Your News** *from DMM2 Tenants and Residents Group, Coltness*

The group has been working hard to raise matters to the council through estate walkabouts. A variety of jobs were completed with the assistance on Bob Brownlie and Ann Djuritschek of NLC. Within this work was cleaning up weeds around road edges, resurfacing roads, improving carparking facilities, improving footpaths, looking at bin houses and cleaning up graffiti.

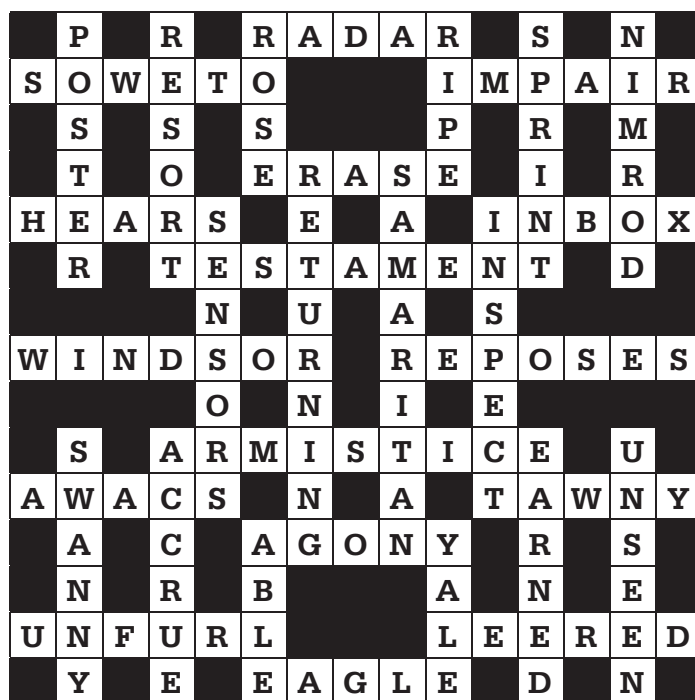
We have also been trying to set up a neighbourhood watch in our area. In undertaking this we sent round a questionnaire. This created opportunities for our members to get involved in a new way.

We have also been getting ourselves organised. We attended committee skills training organised by the Federation and the Support Project and the North Lanarkshire Council conference. We found the training to be most beneficial in helping our committee to execute their duties to the best of their abilities.



# Puzzle Page - Answers

For the questions please see page 7



6	2	1	7	3	5	9	4	8
9	8	4	1	6	2	3	5	7
5	3	7	8	4	9	1	6	2
2	5	3	4	1	8	6	7	9
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4	9	5	3	2	1	7	8	6
3	7	8	6	9	4	2	1	5
1	6	2	5	8	7	4	9	3

## federation news&views

Our newsletter is distributed to over 5,000 people. If you would like to put an article in the Newsletter please contact the office to discuss this.



**For more information please contact**

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