

Ways to get more involved with the Fed

If you are interested in getting more involved with the Federation there are a number of ways.

The Federation is a member organisation. It is really easy to become a member. There is simple application form to complete (literally takes 2 minutes) and you will then get all the benefits of membership. While the majority of the Federation members are tenant organisations you can also be an individual member if there isn't a tenant group operating in your local area. You can get the application form online by going to the Federation's website at www.northlanarkshirefederation.org.uk or by phoning the office on 01236 435 844.

As stated previously we are setting up sub-groups in Community Safety, Waste Management, Roads & Street Lighting and also a group to review our constitution so any member of your tenant group can get involved in these groups.

We also always have a number of events coming up. You can find out about these by either looking at our website or phoning the office. At the moment we have a number of training events coming up on committee skills. These will be held in Airdrie on:

**Saturday 17th January 10am -12:30pm ,
Tuesday 20th January 7pm- 9.30pm
Saturday 24th January 10am - 12:30pm**

All events are free and travel expenses will be paid!

Interested in being involved on the committee?

We have a number of committee vacancies going at the moment so if you are interested then get in touch. We would particularly welcome people from Bellshill, Cumbernauld and Coatbridge who are interested in being co-opted on until our next AGM which will be in March 2009.

How to contact us

If you have any questions about the North Lanarkshire Federation or want to get more involved then please call 01236 435844 for an informal chat.

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Happy Christmas!

We are keen to keep our members up to date about our activities with the right level of information. This is why in addition to writing our six monthly newsletter we have decided to give you a little update aswell.

National recognition for the Fed!

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 years top award for its hard work in contributing to the council's corporate priorities and developing the community voice across North Lanarkshire to impact service delivery.

The second award is a national award that recognises the significant contribution that the North Lanarkshire Federation has had in promoting local democracy and community planning. The award puts the Federations in the top ten projects across Scotland for its hard work.

So it has obviously been a very busy time for the Fed supporting and developing tenant groups to influence council services in North Lanarkshire. So what has been going on for us?

Consultation activities

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



The Federation being awarded NLC's corporate award for community Safety and Development with Monica Patterson, Head of Housing Services and Sharon Donohoe, Development Manager of Tenants Information Service

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 will start early in the New Year and are expected to meet on a monthly basis. If you want to get involved you can call the North Lanarkshire Federation on 01236 435 844. All expenses will be paid.

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.



The Market place at this years busy tenant conference

A puppet show on tenant participation at the tenant conference

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 is discussing plans for this with Housing Services.

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 will be supported by written consultation with tenant groups to ensure every group has an opportunity to have its say on the future of funding.



Robert, chair of NLF closing this years tenants' conference

In-kind support is the non-financial help for example photocopying, postage, advertising, hall bookings or assistance to arrange meetings. The Fed 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're now analysing the information and a report will soon be available on the website (www.northlanarkshirefederation.org.uk), identifying any differences in support given across North Lanarkshire.

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. This system has been recognised nationally as being 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 Fed have been gathering information and identified a number of ways that improvements can be made as well as discussing this recommendations with the Council.

Our new website

All of this consultation and service improvement has been supported by significant improvements to how it communicates with its members. As part of their communication strategy the Federation's website is now live. 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.

Our First Newsletter

The Federation has also published its first newsletter, "Federation News & Views". As well as being sent to all tenant groups in North Lanarkshire, you will see the Newsletter in various locations throughout North Lanarkshire, including first stop shops and housing offices. In total 6,000 copies of the newsletter have been distributed throughout North Lanarkshire, and we have also been trying hard to get articles in newsletters that are distributed to all houses in North Lanarkshire. Hopefully we are slowly getting our word out there!

