



PRESS RELEASE

26th November 2009

Baroness leads community drive to stop domestic violence

Tomorrow charities, politicians, police and community leaders will gather to tackle domestic violence in Gloucestershire. Led by social enterprise charity Novas Scarman and Leader of the House of Lords Baroness Royall the 1 in 4 Conference will draw up plans to strengthen local initiatives. This is one of many Novas Scarman awareness events this week on domestic abuse, which affects one in four women at some point in their lives.

1,500 people have used domestic abuse advice, support and specialist accommodation services provided by Novas Scarman this year. Women and men have moved towards safer futures at a cost of just £279 per person. This work has reduced homelessness, tenancy failure, GP visits, hospital admission and incidents of violence - saving £2million of public money and reducing suffering throughout the community.

Novas Scarman's latest measures in Gloucestershire are the Independent Domestic Violence Advisory (IDVA,) Central Allocation and Referral Point (CARP) and a Woman's Safety Service. These programmes offer accessible advice, referral schemes, improved safety measures for victims and their children and support through the courts.

Friday's event will include talks from Baroness Royall, Maria Donoghue-Mills of Novas Scarman, Thangham Debbonaire of Respect, Roger Clayton of Gloucestershire Police and Hilary Abrahams from Violence Against Women Research Group, Bristol University.

Maria Donoghue-Mills said "We know domestic abuse has a devastating impact on individuals, children and wider communities. Everyone suffers. We are committed to

working with others to reduce the harm caused. One year on, our services in Gloucestershire are showing some positive results, but there are still gaps. The event on Friday is all about working together to do more.”

The 1 in 4 Conference will be held at The Chase Hotel on 27th November 2009 from 9.30-15.30.

For further information please visit www.novasscarman.org/dva.html or contact Sue Portlock, Gloucestershire Domestic Violence Services Manager. Tel: 01242 247 941 email: sue.portlock@novasscarman.org

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITOR

The **Novas Scarman Group** is a social justice charity tackling social disadvantage through social enterprise, innovation and positive impact.

Novas Scarman works at a local level to empower people and communities by creating opportunities for positive change through Personalised Support, Community Development, Pathways into Work and Learning, Campaigning and Social Enterprise.

We empower people by bringing communities together enabling a voice for those often not heard or marginalised, to be at the heart of our communities, and we aim to become one of the world's most influential and effective catalysts for social justice, inclusion and diversity.

Three organisations – Novas Group, PATH and Scarman Trust – merged in December 2007 to create the Novas Scarman Group, representing a joining together of shared values in order to facilitate social justice and inclusion, diversity and cohesion.

The organisation has five core activities:

- Personalised Support Services serving the most disadvantaged communities
- Social Enterprises in the form of Contemporary Urban Centres
- Nation-wide programmes of learning and inclusive pathways to work
- Campaigning and policy advocacy work – “connecting the streets with the corridors of power”
- National and Regional Community Development projects allowing people to positively contribute to their environment.

The Novas Scarman Group believes in and actively works towards enabling Communities to Create Change with a Can Do attitude.

<http://www.novasscarman.org>

<http://www.contemporaryurbancentre.org>