



PRESS RELEASE

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New Chair promises renewal at Novas Scarman

In a statement released today Novas Scarman's new Chair committed to build on extensive work to renew the social justice charity. In the first public announcement since being appointed in September Andrew Barnett explained plans to draw a line under problems which led to a Tenant Services Authority inquiry last year.

Mr Barnett said:

"There are some wonderful people at Novas Scarman and terrific results are being achieved for individuals and communities on the ground. An inquiry is difficult for any organisation but I believe highlighting previous problems has given Novas Scarman an opportunity to start afresh.

"The new board is committed to working with the management to ensure Novas Scarman does the best possible job for disadvantaged people who need our help. We will aim for excellence at every level of our services. Achieving this goal means facing up to the added challenges posed by an economic backdrop of increasing demand for services and depleting resources. The breadth of Novas Scarman's innovative programmes leaves us well placed to deliver reconfigured services that are both beneficial and cost-effective."

Currently leading the UK Branch of influential philanthropic institution Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (www.gulbenkian.org.uk) Andrew Barnett's career has included Director of Policy and Communications at the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Head of Public Affairs at the National Consumer Council. He has also been closely involved in service delivery through his extensive voluntary experience.

There is more than one new face at Novas Scarman as the Board welcomes five other new members: Debbie Sorkin, Ken Smith, Bobbie Graham, Matt Lawson and John Holford. This team has been created to provide the strategic and financial direction needed to build on work started earlier this year and continue turning the charity around. They join existing board members: Gnosoulla Tsioupra-Lewis, Chris Chubb, Mehban Chowdery, Malcolm John and Maureen Forrest. The current TSA appointees: Tina Barnard, Malcolm Levi and Peter Molyneux, will be stepping down shortly.

Social Enterprise Ambassador Maria Donoghue-Mills has been the sole Chief Executive since May 2009 and initiated the turnaround strategy. Ms Donoghue-Mills commented:

"There were serious issues last year and I understand why people were angry. Since then we have addressed a range of difficult aspects of our management including financial controls and the disposal of our last housing assets and we are emerging stronger from the difficulties of the past. Andrew Barnett and the greatly enhanced Board will give Novas Scarman the best chance to build on our solid foundations and move to the forefront of innovative community-based solutions that work".

The board and management intend to give Novas Scarman a stronger focus and channel the energy of its dedicated staff into the most beneficial work. Andrew Barnett explains:

“All the hostels have been transferred in favour of a greater diversity of community projects across England and Wales. We now need to plan ahead and demonstrate how we can deliver real social value without housing. Novas Scarman teams are delivering a breadth of services which have excellent results locally in everything from preventing homelessness to helping people out of domestic violence situations. In cases such as our Supporting People contracts, social improvements are being achieved cost-effectively, but this should not make us complacent.

“As a national charity we need to create a virtuous circle of improvement – learning from each project, trialling innovative ways to help people in need, sharing our findings, informing policy makers and ultimately achieving more than the sum of our parts. Good steps have been taken, but there is a lot of work to do.”

Central Government is also putting faith in Novas Scarman with contracts recently won from Communities and Local Government, Ministry of Justice and the Department of Work and Pensions.

<http://www.novasscarman.org>

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Notes to editors

For more information please contact:

Vicky Hoad or Jane Woodley
Blue Rocket
01273 779 196
Vicky@bluerocketgroup.com

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.