

8th April 2009

Novas Scarman announces plans for national community programme

Social justice charity Novas Scarman has today announced early plans for a three-year programme to help community groups through technology, support and training.

The Can Do programme will use the grassroots experience of Novas Scarman's regional network to increase the quality and quantity of community work in the UK. It is being financed by Communities and Local Government's new £9million Community Empowerment Fund as one of only 21 successful bids out of 160 applications.

Can Do will include a range of initiatives that enable community groups to learn from each other and replicate successful innovations. At the moment regional funding streams mean community projects only operate on a local level and good experiences are rarely passed on to other groups. Novas Scarman aims to turn this around. For example the Can Do programme will enable communities from very different parts of the UK to learn from each other through workshops, online development tools and accredited training.

Training aims to bring together all the elements needed by those embarking on the first steps of community activity. This involves passing on skills like mentoring, community leadership and effective management. New media and social enterprise are also likely to play an important part.

Chief Executive Maria Donoghue-Mills said:

"Community activism has a problem with longevity because individuals move from an area or change the focus of their lives. Much activity is based around a key issue at a point of time and momentum can be lost after a major event has passed.

Can Do is about supplementing local skills with practical training and toolkits as well as sharing best practice to keep community groups in the best position to deal with difficult challenges.

We are looking forward to taking our work to a national level to equip the next generation of community activists."

Community activity has been at the core of Novas Scarman Group for more than a decade. The organisation has long supported the development of grassroots community work, promoting a 'can do' culture in local communities. Its diverse work helps build skills and capacity to strengthen community groups.

Visit [\[insert url\]](#) for more information.

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Notes to editors

About Novas Scarman Group

Novas Scarman Group is a major social justice charity at the cutting edge of tackling social disadvantage through social enterprise, innovation and positive impact.

At the beginning of 2008 The Novas Group, The Scarman Trust and Path merged together to form the Novas Scarman Group.

The charity works at a local level to empower people and communities. It creates opportunities for positive change through personalised support and development, pathways into work and learning, inclusive local decision making, change programmes and releasing enterprise and cultural expression.

The Group has a strong reputation for the delivery of quality community-based services, and for new and innovative partnerships with people who experience inequality, exclusion and discrimination.

Please visit <http://www.novasscarman.org/>

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