

PRESS RELEASE

18th May 2007

Filthy Rich & Homeless

Tuesdays at 9pm; Wednesdays at 8pm; Thursdays at 10pm. starting May 22nd for four weeks

Britain's rich are getting even richer but how would the people who have everything cope with having nothing at all?

In this four-part series, five of the nation's wealthy accepted a challenge to swap their expensive cars, designer clothes and luxury homes for ten days of living alongside homeless people.

Based on a real course that takes place in the United States, experts strip the five wealthy volunteers of all their money and possessions and dump them onto the streets of London.

It's compulsive viewing as the two worlds of riches and rags collide.

One of the volunteers, Ravi, finds himself in **Novas' Arlington House, Camden Town**, one of the largest hostels in Europe and one of London's oldest hostels where many of the residents are alcoholics.

Ravi had made his first million by the time he was 18, as a nightclub promoter at the party resort of Ayia Napa, Cyprus. In 2002 he was named Young Achiever of the Year in Eastern Eye's Asian Business Awards.

However he swaps his home comforts for ten days on the streets, and is forced to confront a few demons of his own as his preconceptions about homelessness are challenged.

During his stay in **Arlington House**, Ravi is welcomed by Joe McGarry, Head of Development & Community Services for Novas. Joe himself spent years living on the streets and suffering from alcohol addiction, and eventually moved into Arlington House himself. Since getting involved in resident volunteering and involvement, he is now employed by Novas as one of Novas' senior managers.

Maria Donoghue-Mills, Group Chief Executive, says

'The documentary really outlines the issues homelessness and social exclusion faced by people today. In response to these issues Novas has always provided more than a roof over the head of the homeless. Our many Social Enterprises provide opportunities for people in similar circumstances to those represented in this documentary to gain employment. Novas Arts gives the socially excluded a platform on which to express their views and the Support Services are integral to the development of individuals dealing with numerous problems and addictions. If this were a real life scenario for someone like Ravi, the structure outlined above would give that person every opportunity to start rebuilding his life again, as it did for Joe McGarry.'

If you wish to find out more about Novas or the documentary please don't hesitate to contact us via the details provided below.

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Press contact:

Alexandra Pryce
Marketing & Communications Manager
020 7424 3060
<http://www.novas.org/>
alexandra.pryce@novas.org

NOTES TO EDITOR

Novas Group aims to change lives through arts, enterprise and community support.

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

More recently we are developing extensive work, learning, social enterprise and cultural services to support our core work and to match and stretch the diverse aspirations of the people we support.

Working across the country we respond to local need and also contribute to regional, national and European agendas by identifying and providing sustainable solutions.

As a group we develop innovative community empowerment strategies that integrate our services into the wider community. We are currently remodelling many of our large hostels to raise the living standards for people who are homeless, within buildings that will become a part of their local communities.

These projects will also offer learning, cultural and enterprise space for a wide range of individuals and communities who experience exclusion.

Increasingly we are developing tenancy support services in people's own homes, along with education outreach services, cultural development services in partnership with local arts facilities and communities, and developing our own enterprise and learning centres.