



## **PRESS RELEASE**

22 September 2008

### **Novas Scarman shortlisted for UK Housing Awards 2008**

The Novas Scarman Group has been shortlisted in the UK Housing Awards 2008, delivered by the Chartered Institute of Housing and Inside Housing magazine.

Novas Scarman's 'Children Can Do' project has been shortlisted in the 'Empowering and Involving Communities' category. This award celebrates the benefits of housing organisations and people living and working in the neighbourhood coming together to inform and shape wider community objectives.

The Children Can Do project has supported children aged 5-13 to be at the centre of service design, commissioning and delivery of young people's services in Brighton and Hove. A panel of young children appraises all applications and decides which projects to fund out of a £50,000 budget. The design of all projects must be led by children, with appropriate support and supervision being provided by adults. A truly innovative aspect is the way that children are supported to be at the centre of the project. For instance adults offer advice and support to the panel but only children can vote. The project has succeeded in giving young people more control over young people's activities by empowering and involving them. Levels of engagement in children's services have increased.

Winners will be announced at an Awards Ceremony and Lunch on 6th November.

**ENDS**

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## NOTES TO EDITOR

The **Novas Scarman Group** is major 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 and development, pathways into work and learning, inclusive local decision making and change programmes, and releasing enterprise and cultural expression.

We bring communities together by 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.

The organisation has four core activities:

- Community support services serving the most disadvantaged communities
- Clusters of social enterprises based in 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”

In October 2007 Maria Donoghue-Mills, Co-Group Chief Executive/Founder of the Novas Scarman Group, was appointed as a Social Enterprise Ambassador as a key part of the Government's Social Enterprise Action Plan, which was launched last year by then Chancellor Gordon Brown. The programme is funded by the Cabinet Office and led by the Social Enterprise Coalition.