

MEDIA INFORMATION



Esh Group announces launch of £1m Charitable Trust

New Charity will benefit youth, environment and community causes in the region

for further information call Karen Humble on 07976 841 123

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Durham, The Esh Group has announced that it has established a Charitable Trust worth £1 million. 'The Esh Charitable Trust' will run for at least the next five years during which time the Group intends that it will donate approximately £200,000 annually into the Charity.

The Trust is intended to reflect the culture and values of the Company; that of a local business which cares about its people, its community, its marketplace and its Region. Reinvestment in the North East is a long-standing principle at the Esh Group.

The specific objectives of the Charity will be to fund 'good causes' in the North of England such as:

- environmental work – including protection, education and awareness
- provision of skills and training to young people and disadvantaged people
- supporting our communities

A range of different awards values will be made annually, ideally including a flagship project of approximately £100,000, a small number of awards of up to £10,000 and a larger number of awards of up to £1,000.

Austin Donohoe, Non-executive Chairman of the Esh Group, explained;

'We are delighted to announce the launch of this fund. The Esh Group has grown over the years as a result of many things: hard work, timely opportunities and a good deal of help from others too.

'The Trust is a structured way of reinvesting in the community – a fulfillment of the vision and commitment we have, both as a business and as individuals, for our region. Our ambition is that this Charitable Trust will underpin and further the efforts of those who share our ideals and principles.

'Construction is not usually regarded as glamorous – but we at Esh know how essential, exciting and rewarding our efforts can be. It would be nice to think that this character could be reflected in the projects which are chosen for support by the Trust – a champion for unsung heroes perhaps?'

The Trust will be governed by an independent board of up to twelve trustees which will sanction awards. Michael Hogan and Jack Lumsden, both founder directors of the Esh Group, and Tony Carroll Jnr, son of co-founder of Lumsden & Carroll, Tony Carroll Snr., will serve on the Trust Board together with Sir Bobby Robson, Austin Donohoe of Esh Group and St Cuthberts Care, Karen Humble of Karen Gray Limited, Durham County Councillor, Don Ross, Douglas Emmerson of J & G Archibald Limited, John Flynn of Dickinson Dees, Eric Morgan of Sanderson Weatherall, and Ron Batty, Chief Executive of Chester-le Street and Durham City Development Agency.

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The Esh Group is well-known for its inclusive policies – such as their innovative employee Share Scheme. The Charitable Trust will add to that philosophy as a number of employee representatives will serve on the Trust's Operational Board, including;

- Michael Barrigan, John Davies, Kevin McGargle and Michael Henderson of Lumsden & Carroll
- John Thompson and Susan Walker of Deerness Fencing
- Kevin Young of Dunelm Castle Homes
- Darren Hardman of Sones Landscaping
- Heather Newell of Dunelm Property Services
- Keith Walker of Bartram Walker
- Lindsay Lowes and Brian Manning of Esh Group itself

Julie Lumsden, daughter of Jack, will be seconded by the Esh Group to manage the day to day administration of the Trust. County Durham Foundation will receive all applications to the Trust in the first instance and will monitor use of funds and the success of awards granted. Anyone wishing to apply for support can download an application form from www.eshcharitabletrust.co.uk or www.countydurhamfoundation.co.uk.

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Notes to Editors

Photograph attached at file [ESH – PH – CT - Trustees] jpeg format

Caption - left to right;

Trustees Douglas Emmerson, Karen Humble, Jack Lumsden, Sir Bobby Robson, Tony Carroll Jnr, Michael Hogan, Ron Batty, Eric Morgan, Don Ross look on as Austin Donohoe (right) receives first £200,000 from Brian Manning, Group Chief Executive on behalf of the Trustees. (Jon Flynn, Trustee, not pictured)

- o Based in the North East of England, the Esh Group provides construction and construction related services to both public and private sector clients. In 2004, the Esh Group won the prestigious 'North East Company of the Year' Award for 2003 and Chief Executive, Brian Manning, was awarded 'North East Executive of the Year' for Durham and Wearside.
- o In 2004 Esh Group achieved a record turnover of £95m. The Group employs over 800 people in the region and exercises a regional purchasing policy whereby it commits to support indigenous suppliers first and foremost.
- o 'Fit for Employment' & 'Fit for Employment Again'
This exemplar work related learning programme for young people has become synonymous with the Esh Group. It is widely acclaimed by the business community, educationalists, Government Ministers and students alike. The scheme embraces a number of Co Durham schools and guarantees the offer of 20 full-time permanent jobs with apprenticeships each year. Based on the schools programme, 'Fit for Employment Again' is aimed at people who, for a variety of reasons, have become difficult to employ and have no recognised training or experience.
- o Employee Share Ownership Scheme – was launched with the inception of the Group in 1999 and is an important part of the culture of the business. All employees are eligible to participate and receive shares as part of a performance related reward package.
- o The subsidiary companies of the Esh Group are;
 - o Bartram Walker heating, plumbing & electrical installation and maintenance
 - o Bardon Esh waste management & environmental services
 - o Deerness Fencing fencing manufacture and installation
 - o Dunelm Castle Homes residential property building and development
 - o Dunelm Property Services social housing, construction and maintenance
 - o Lumsden & Carroll civil engineering and building
 - o Mechplant plant hire
 - o North East Construction Training training provider
 - o Sones Landscaping landscaping & grounds maintenance
- o More details can be found at www.eshgroup.co.uk