

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Talk

More than 200 years after the abolition of slavery it is estimated over 45 million men, women and children are trapped in modern slavery. Archbishop Justin Welby says:

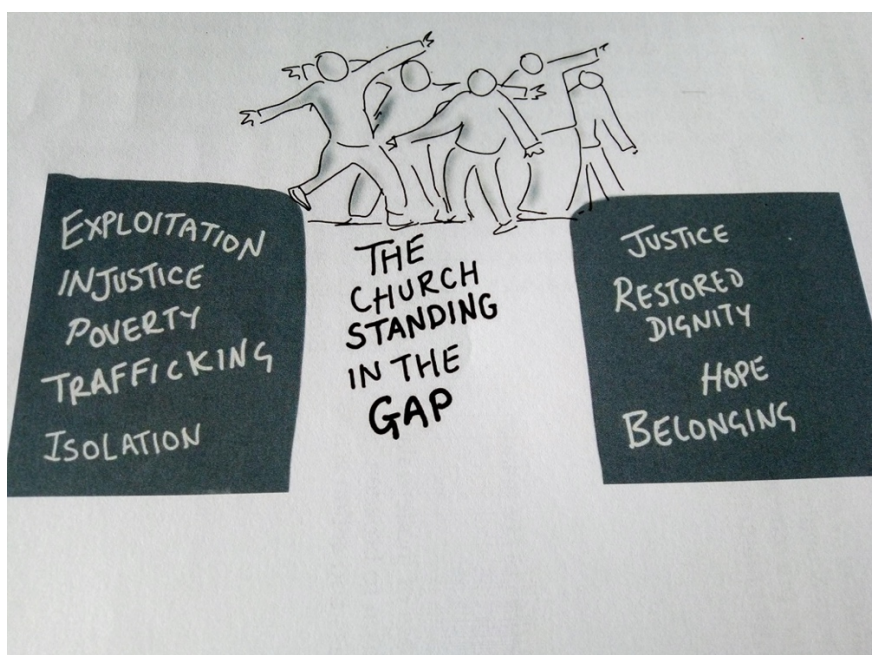
'William Wilberforce convinced his generation slavery was a sin. That belief has not changed. The sin lies in our ignorance to its existence around us'.

The Clewer Initiative forms part of the Church of England's approach to eradicating modern slavery. Funded by the Clewer Sisters, an Anglican order of nuns founded in 1852 to help marginalised young women, it provides shelter and teaching a trade.

The Clewer Initiative's aim is to enable Church of England dioceses and wider Church networks to develop strategies to detect modern slavery in their communities and provide victim support and care. It works with the Church locally, identifying resources to be utilised, developing partnerships, and creating a wider network of advocates seeking to end modern slavery together.

Nationally, it involves developing a network of practitioners sharing models of best practice and providing evidenced-based data to resource the Church's national engagement with statutory and non-statutory bodies.

The tools to end modern slavery already exist within the local community. The Church, present in all communities and at the heart of many, has a primary responsibility in leading these efforts.



'Modern slavery' is an umbrella term for various forms of slavery, trafficking of human beings and their exploitation. A complex, harmful, largely hidden crime, modern slavery strips its victims of dignity and basic human rights.

Survivors of modern slavery tell stories of being sold a better life. They are often vulnerable, from areas with little possibility of work or education. Victims are offered a job, a chance to make money and build a new life for themselves. Their travel to different towns or countries, is organised and every aspect of their trip controlled, but the promised life is not to be.

So, is there a difference between those who are smuggled and those who are trafficked? A person from overseas who wants to come illegally to the UK pays a smuggler an extortionate amount of money to smuggle them into Britain, perhaps in the back of a lorry, container etc. Arriving at a UK destination they are released - the smuggler goes one way, the smuggled left to go theirs.

A victim of trafficking will have been recruited, transported, and transferred for the sole purpose of exploitation. Many are trafficked from overseas. A huge proportion are trafficked within the UK. The promised life turns out to be a lie: enslaved, owned by a slave master, their freedom is constrained.

Who are the people conned and coerced into a life of slavery? The homeless, those on low incomes, addicts, the poor, the mentally ill, the unemployed – anyone in need. Recent research reported over two thirds of homeless charities believe hostels, night shelters and some food banks are being targeted to lure people into slavery.

The job offered turns out to be non-existent. Instead, they are forced to work in difficult and degrading conditions, with little or no pay. The threat of violence, to themselves or their families, traps them with little means of escape.

The Global Slavery Index estimates this is the reality for 136,000, men, women, and children in the UK. Modern slavery knows no borders - people of all ages and races can be victims.

Modern slavery may coexist with a wide range of other forms of abuse (assault, rape, child abuse). Victims can be employed legitimately and enslaved over time and not be directly employed by those who traffic them, hidden from public view or have varying degrees of freedom of movement. In all cases, victims are psychologically and physically coerced into exploitative situations, with their lives and proceeds of their labours controlled by others.

Typically, victims are reluctant to speak to authorities. Indeed, victims may not even perceive themselves to be 'enslaved'. Even if their trafficker does not completely physically control them, a mistrust of authority may stop them going to the police.

Victims are exploited in agriculture, construction, car washes, nail bars, domestic servitude, the service industry, sexual exploitation, forced marriages, organ harvesting and various other criminal behaviours, such as benefit fraud, pickpocketing, theft, and organised crime.

Slavery is a high profit, low-risk crime; serious organised criminality sits behind exploitation and forced labour.

Cases of child trafficking and exploitation are regularly identified throughout the country via social services, police, immigration, health, education, etc. Trafficking and exploitation of

children is a complex issue and sometimes we all need a reality check. Remember Rotherham, Rochdale, Oxford, Bristol, Newcastle, Aylesbury, Peterborough, a growing roll call of English towns and cities where teenage girls were targeted and abused by gangs of men. Drink, drugs, and even offers of food and shelter were used to prey on these vulnerable girls for sex.

Children are also used to run drugs across the country. County Lines is the term used by Police to describe the process of urban gangs exploiting children and young people.

Gangs operate drug-dealing networks between urban and deprived areas in the UK. This is called 'Going Country'. Gangs groom young people in urban areas, forcing them to sell drugs. Exploiters give young people a phone called a 'deal line' and drug users order by contacting that mobile phone. The Children's Society report children being forced to sell drugs in their own communities. To be a victim of county lines you don't have to travel far.

The 'typical victim' is a boy aged 14-18, from an urban area. However, victims of both genders as young as 10 have been exploited. Poverty is the main risk factor - children may see county lines as an opportunity to earn money and believe they can stay in control, but cannot.

These exploited children need to be recognised as victims. Other factors which place children at risk include being in care, excluded from mainstream or in alternative education, and those who go missing.

You may have also heard the term 'cuckooing'. Gangs take over a property belonging to a vulnerable adult, often with physical or mental disability or who is abusing drugs themselves. Coercion, threats, and abuse control the victim, while abusers sell drugs from their property. Gangs will operate several 'cuckooing' addresses simultaneously, rotating use to avoid being found by police. This tactic includes serviced apartments, Airbnb, holiday lets, budget hotels and even caravan parks.

Case study and discussion

I was brought up by travellers. I don't know who my parents were. They were kind to me, looked after me. When I grew up, I couldn't get work. People don't like travellers and they don't like people who are different, like me. I couldn't read or write, so I tried to get labouring jobs.

One day a group of men turned up and said they needed strong people for casual labour, stacking and that. They seemed to like me. The boss said he would take me on, so I was glad. We went to another town in the boss's truck and then went from house to house offering to do things like lay driveways, cheap prices, cash in hand. Thing is, the boss would set us to work and tell us to finish by a certain time. We weren't to speak to anyone or talk about the job – that's why I was useful. We worked until dark and slept in a garage. The boss took all the cash and gave us nothing, except some food and cigarettes. When I asked the householder for food and drink, I got beaten by the boss, he slapped me and yelled. I work all day to lay the bricks really fast but get nothing. And now I am a long way from home, nowhere else to go.

So how will we recognise the trafficked, the enslaved?

There is no set number of signs indicating a person is a victim of trafficking, slavery. Factors which could suggest a potential victim are injuries, inadequate clothing, wearing the same

clothes daily; allowing others to speak for them, no social interaction, not allowed to talk to customers, ever changing work force.

If it doesn't feel right it probably isn't!

Is there a property in your street - or even next door- where people arrive and leave throughout the day/night, have irregular visitors, or lots of people appear to live there? Picked up in minibuses/vans at unusual hours? Perhaps there are grills or reflective film on the windows; vents protruding through roof. Houses of all types - if it doesn't feel right it probably isn't!

Understanding and tackling modern slavery is a complex challenge.

So, who is helping conquer this heinous crime? The 2015 Modern Slavery Act consolidated existing legislation and added two civil orders for prevention, established an independent Anti-slavery Commissioner and strengthened law enforcement powers at sea.

The Clewer Initiative has launched two successful Apps for mobile phones.

For users of car washes, and there are 19,00 hand car wash in the England, The Safe Car Wash APP asks a series of questions, then requests the user to report concerns to the Modern Slavery Helpline. The data is anonymised and shared with the National Crime Agency and the Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority, two law enforcement agencies which lead on stamping out modern slavery across the UK.

The Farm Work Welfare App (FWWA) is a new tool to help rural employers tackle labour abuse and modern slavery in farming, horticulture, and food production sector.

Every year, hundreds of migrant workers are placed in UK fields against their will, exploited by ruthless criminal gangs. Exact numbers on rural slavery are difficult but we believe it is growing in line with the overall increase in modern slavery. The App is easy to use, designed to support both farmers and pickers, and will become a standard part of the 'recruitment pack'. It provides farm workers, farmers and growers with guidance to strengthen their recruitment processes and prevent labour abuse and exploitation. It offers practical information and signposting on existing protections.

The victim, who helps them?

The National Referral Mechanism, NRM, provides a national framework where public bodies such as the Police, UK Visas and Immigration, the National Crime Agency, local authorities and charities work together to identify potential victims of slavery & trafficking, and provide appropriate support and protection.

The Salvation Army and associated charities run safe houses, where rescued victims can stay for a recovery and reflection period. The victim is likely to have suffered physical, psychological abuse and experienced trauma. Medical and emotional support is available, including advice on immigration, legal rights, the criminal justice system, education, training, and employment.

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From 31 March 2016, all businesses in the UK with a turnover of £36 million and above must make available on their websites a Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement each financial

year. A key aspect of this statement will be how companies are raising awareness of modern slavery throughout their organisation, including how employees working abroad or who interface with the supply chain, are trained in awareness on specific anti-slavery measures.

But what can we do?

- Put the Modern Slavery Helpline on your mobile phones now! 08000121700; For concerns about labour exploitation: The Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority on 08004320804
When you see something, where the situation is not right, telephone and report your suspicion –If it does not feel right it, it probably isn't.
Want to remain anonymous? Call Crimestoppers on 0800555111
In an emergency 999
- Put a poster in your church, church hall, workplace, community centre
- Download the Safe Car Wash and Farm Welfare Apps
- Go to The Clewer web page and find out more www.theclewerinitiative.org
- Talk, tell your children, your grandchildren about today's slaves, the 136,00 living in our communities
- Look at resources on Together in Sussex website www.togetherinsussex.org.uk
- And last, but not least – pray for the trafficked, pray for the enslaved,
Pray for those working day & night to rescue and support victims.
Pray that we see the unseen.

Mothers Union Prayer 'The prayers we breathe', no 148 Trafficking

God-our constant friend of all time,
Help all women, men and children who are used,
In trafficking to find in your arms,
The love and respect that they have been denied.
When people have been trafficked across the world,
Treated as slaves, and exploited mercilessly –
Be there for them in their darkest hours.
May their vision of the world
Still hold a glimmer of hope.
May we, through Christ working in us,
Fight for an end to trafficking
And an end to any abuse
In which the weak or vulnerable
Are exploited by the strong. Amen

**TOGETHER
IN SUSSEX** 