

MODERN SLAVERY: A BRIEFING

Modern Slavery can take many forms including the trafficking of people¹, forced labour, servitude and slavery.

Any consent victims have given to their treatment will be irrelevant where they have been coerced, deceived or provided with payment or benefit to achieve that consent.

Children (those aged under 18) are considered victims of trafficking, whether or not they have been coerced, deceived or paid to secure their compliance. They need only have been recruited, transported, received or harboured for the purpose of exploitation.

The term Modern Slavery captures a whole range of types of exploitation, many of which occur together. These include but are not limited to:



SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

This includes but is not limited to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, forced prostitution and the abuse of children for the production of child abuse images/videos. 42% of all reported trafficking victims in the UK are victims of sexual exploitation.²



DOMESTIC SERVITUDE

This involves a victim being forced to work in usually private households, usually performing domestic chores and childcare duties. Their freedom may be restricted and they may work long hours often for little or no pay, often sleeping where they work. A quarter (24%) of reported victims of domestic servitude in the UK are children.³



FORCED LABOUR

Victims may be forced to work long hours for little or no pay in poor conditions under verbal or physical threats of violence to them or their families. It can happen in various industries, including construction, manufacturing, laying driveways, hospitality, food packaging, agriculture, maritime and beauty (nail bars). Often victims are housed together in one dwelling. Over a third (36%) of reported victims of Modern Slavery are subject to forced labour. One fifth of all reported forced labour victims are children – an increase of 24% since 2012. Three quarters of all reported forced labour victims are male.⁴



CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION

This can be understood as the exploitation of a person to commit a crime, such as pick-pocketing, shop-lifting, cannabis cultivation, drug trafficking and other similar activities that are subject to penalties and imply financial gain for the trafficker. 16% of reported Modern Slavery victims are also involved in fraud or financial crime whereby perpetrators force victims to claim benefits on arrival but the money is withheld, or the victim is forced to take out loans or credit cards.⁵ Cannabis cultivation is the next most common form of criminal exploitation – and 81% of those exploited are children, most of whom are from Vietnam.⁶



OTHER FORMS OF EXPLOITATION

Organ removal; forced begging; forced benefit fraud; forced marriage and illegal adoption.

Freeing the nation from these cruel acts is a responsibility for us all and a priority for the government. In June 2014, The Modern Slavery Bill was introduced in the House of Commons to ensure law enforcement has stronger powers, perpetrators receive suitable severe punishment and victims are better protected and supported.

While Modern Slavery covers a range of complex issues that are often hard to detect, it is important the public are aware that such abuses can take place and that victims have a right to identification and support.

Professionals (including the police, social workers, immigration and relevant support organisations) are working together to identify and safeguard potential victims in line with the UK's legal obligations⁷ and should be familiar with the National Referral Mechanism, the official system of identification and assistance for potential victims of trafficking, and the rights of victims.⁸

In addition to this, in the case of children, child trafficking and exploitation is child abuse and therefore should be treated as a child protection matter, with police and local authority children's services notified immediately and existing child protection procedures followed.

Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 places a general duty on every local authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need. Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. In addition, a Local Authority has a duty, under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, to make enquiries when 'they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm'. Many children travel without documents or are given false or forged identity documents, making it difficult to know their exact age. However, where the age of a person is uncertain and there are reasons to believe that they are a child they must be presumed a child until their age has been assessed formally. For more information, refer to relevant statutory guidance and best practice guidance.⁹

INDICATORS OF MODERN SLAVERY

Signs of various types of slavery and exploitation are often hidden, making it hard to recognise potential victims. Victims can be any age, gender or ethnicity or nationality. Whilst by no means exhaustive, this is a list of some common signs:

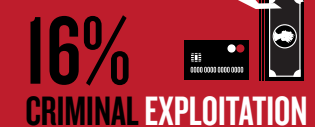
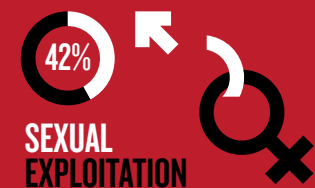
Legal documents

Is the person in possession of their legal documents (passport, identification and bank account details) or are these being held by someone else? Victims will often be forced to use false or forged identity documents.

THE MAKE-UP OF MODERN SLAVERY IN THE UK



COMMON AREAS OF LABOUR EXPLOITATION



Medical care

Does the person have old or serious untreated injuries? Have they delayed seeing a healthcare professional, and are they vague, reluctant or inconsistent in explaining how the injury occurred?

Appearance

Does the person look malnourished, unkempt, or appear withdrawn? Are they suffering physical injuries? Do they have few personal possessions and often wear the same clothes? What clothes they do wear may not be suitable for their work.

Behaviour

Is the person withdrawn or appear frightened, unable to answer questions directed at them or speak for themselves and/or an accompanying third party speaks for them? If they do speak, are they inconsistent in the information they provide, including basic facts such as the address where they live? Do they appear under the control/influence of others, rarely interact or appear unfamiliar with their neighbourhood or where they work? Many victims will not be able to speak English

Fear of authorities

Is the person afraid of the authorities? Are they scared of removal or what might happen to their families?

Debt bondage

Does the victim perceive themselves to be in debt to someone else or in a situation of dependence?

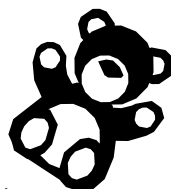
Context

Victims may often encounter authorities whilst being trafficked from one area to another or if found in a situation that potentially criminalises them, such as a police raid or an immigration raid.

Signs specific to child victims¹⁰

Absent parent or legal guardian

Is the child being cared for by an adult that is not their parent or legal guardian and is the quality of the relationship between the child and their adult carer poor and a reason for concern? Some children may not be attending school or registered with a GP.



Multiple children

Are there a number of unrelated children found at one address? Does the child move location frequently?

Identity documents

Missing, altered or false documentation is common.

Missing children

Children who come into contact with authorities often disappear and are re-trafficked.

Grooming

Children may not always demonstrate outward signs of distress and may have a 'bond' with those exploiting them and have been groomed to not disclose their abuse – however, they are likely to be very scared and traumatised.

ADVICE FROM FRONT LINE PROFESSIONALS ON THE GROUND ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE DEALING WITH MODERN SLAVERY:

"I panicked the first time I came in contact with a victim of Modern Slavery. But once I got my head around the fact that victims of Modern Slavery are another group of vulnerable people we need to protect, I quickly realised that as with all cases involving a vulnerable person, my task is to notify the police."

"Quite often when you come in contact with a victim of Modern Slavery, it is usually within the context of dealing with other matters – so for example, a neighbour or passerby has made a report about a suspicious property and you've been called out to investigate. However upon arrival at the scene, you notice the level of security around the property is considerably greater than that of other houses on the street or you might notice the windows have a reflective film on them. As well as looking into the initial report which you are there to investigate, it is important that you don't ignore these other signs, and you act on them. In order to spot Modern Slavery, we can't afford to think and act in silos; we need to remain vigilant to it at all times."

"There has been the occasion when you spot a victim and you want to help, but they refuse your offer to help and it's not your role to try and rescue them, as you may put them at greater risk. In such instances, as with all cases of Modern Slavery, the best thing to do is to notify the police."

HOW TO SPOT A PROPERTY WHERE A VICTIM OF MODERN SLAVERY MAY BE HELD

Outside the property

- Are there bars covering the windows of the property or are they permanently covered on the inside? Are the curtains always drawn?
Do the windows have reflective film or coatings applied to them?
- Does the entrance to the property have CCTV cameras installed?
- Is the letterbox sealed to prevent use?
- Is there any sign that electricity may have been tacked on from neighbouring properties or directly from power lines?



Inside the property

- Is access to the back rooms of the property restricted or are doors locked?
- Is the property overcrowded and badly cared for?

HOW TO SPOT A BUSINESS THAT MIGHT BE USING FORCED LABOUR

Appearance

Is the worker wearing inappropriate clothing for their job? Do workers seem to have noticeably poor personal hygiene, fearful or unwilling to engage with the public?



Children

Are there children working on the premises?

It is extremely important to be aware that trafficking gangs are dangerous criminals, therefore it is vital that members of the public do not attempt to act on suspicions themselves, which may put themselves or the possible victims at risk.

Instead, should you come across anyone you believe could be a victim of Modern Slavery, a property that raises suspicion, or a business you think might be using forced labour, call the helpline on **0800 0121 700** or call the police - it is the duty of trained professionals to identify victims so leave it up to them. If a child is believed to be at risk, immediately contact the police and the local authority children's services.

For further information please go to modernslavery.co.uk.

1. Defined in Directive 2011/36/EU as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or reception of persons, including the exchange or transfer of control over those persons, by means 'of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person', for the purpose of exploitation. The consent of a victim of trafficking in human beings to the exploitation, whether intended or actual, shall be irrelevant where any of the means ("") set forth in paragraph 1 has been used or if the victim is a child
2. National Referral Mechanism Statistics 2013
3. National Referral Mechanism Statistics 2013
4. National Referral Mechanism Statistics 2013
5. UKHTC: A Strategic Assessment on the Nature and Scale of Human Trafficking in 2012, August 2013
6. UKHTC: A Strategic Assessment on the Nature and Scale of Human Trafficking in 2012, August 2013
7. <http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/specialist-capabilities/uk-human-trafficking-centre/national-referral-mechanism>
8. See the EU Trafficking Directive. Available: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:101:0001:0011:EN:PDF>
9. See - DfE guidance – Care of unaccompanied and trafficking children: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-of-unaccompanied-and-trafficked-children>; LSCB Trafficking Guidance and Toolkit:- <http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/trafficking/>; National Referral Mechanism : guidance for child first responders:- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-referral-mechanism-guidance-for-child-first-responders>
10. For more indicators of child trafficking, please see: Safeguarding Children Who May Have Been Trafficked: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-who-may-have-been-trafficked-practice-guidance> and the London Trafficking Toolkit: http://www.ecpat.org.uk/sites/default/files/london_safeguarding_trafficked_children_toolkit_feb_2011.pdf