



A NETWORK OF AGENCIES TACKLING MODERN SLAVERY IN THE WEST MIDLANDS AND BEYOND

FOREWORD

Robin Brierley, Executive Director, West Midlands Anti Slavery Network

'This will be our last newsletter of 2020 and I sincerely hope that this finds you and your colleagues' friends and families well. It has been an unprecedented year in terms of the challenges we have all faced and so saying thank you for all the support and hard work means that much more on this occasion.

I would like to take this opportunity to say that if you are facing any challenges or need any help and support please do contact us. If we are unable to help directly there will always be someone from the network, we can reach out to.

Although the year has been challenging for all our organisations, it has been far worse for victims and survivors – we have seen that it has been difficult for all organisations to provide the same level of support, and at the same time there has been a significant drop in the numbers of people being identified for many reasons. It has also been a challenge for us all to ensure that slavery and trafficking remain a key priority for all agencies. Whilst at the same time recognising it is linked to other forms of criminality, abuse, and homelessness. So, thank you all for your hard work in 2020 and I feel we will have much to do in 2021.

Our virtual Anti-Slavery Day event this year was hugely successful with 350 people signing up to it, which was the maximum number of attendees we were allowed. The format of panel discussions throughout the day worked well and the feedback was exceptional – thank you to all the panellists, attendees and organisers (maybe the days of attending expensive conferences is a thing of the past) – we recorded all the discussions and a link to them on YouTube is here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqvKJlj-JnYzFiH6aY49EtQ>

We have continued our work on the care and support task group, and it remains very well supported – this group is also a source of significant items on our Challenge Board, which gets escalated to the West Midlands MSHT Strategic Board hosted by the PCC. Please do continue to submit any challenges you are facing – or even items you wish to be taken back to the strategic forums.

There are two new groups recently formed and although at an early stage I am very excited about how they are progressing. The first is the Language and Media group and that is looking at the use of language and media in relation to MSHT – this group, led by Amber, has identified that the inappropriate use of language and media images can not only be inappropriate but offensive to victims and survivors too. The group is looking at some really interesting ways in which to address this – if you are interested in this work please contact amber.cagney@westmidlandsantislavery.org

You may have seen our emails about our intention to produce an anti-racism statement and as spoken it has to be one that makes a difference and not to be filed away and forgotten – we have given a lot of thought on how we will do this and as always it's best approached in partnership so we meet for the first time this week. This is a significant piece of work and if you would like to know more or be part of the work please do contact us at info@westmidlandsantislavery.org

Thank you again for all your support in 2020 and we look forward to working with you all in 2021. Have a lovely festive break and best wishes to you, your families and colleagues'.

SAFEPLACE UPDATE

Hebe Lawson, Advice & Advocacy Coordinator, West Midlands Anti Slavery Network

SafePlace is open and continues to provide service users with accommodation, advice and advocacy and health and wellbeing support throughout the second COVID-19 lockdown.

Since reopening in July, we have supported eight survivors of human trafficking or modern slavery. These service users have all been unique in their needs and experiences, yet one thing many have enjoyed is gardening. The SafePlace garden has had a complete revamp and it is looking fantastic! We have added plants and home comforts like blankets and cushions to SafePlace to make the house feel more homely for service users. We have received a variety of donations in the past few months and we would love to take this opportunity to acknowledge the generosity of these donor organisations.

SafePlace received two generous donations of books, clothes, food, and towels from Sifa Fireside. We also received two curated collections of books from the Library of Birmingham, one of English books and one of foreign language books. In addition, we received a fantastic donation of bibles from Birmingham City Mission, and a brilliant donation of food and toiletries from Vineyard Church. Finally, SafePlace received a luxurious donation of slavery free chocolate bars from Tony's Chocolonely.



All of these donations allow SafePlace to offer a high standard of culturally aware and survivor centred support, so thank you!

INTRODUCING DAVID WILSON



Although we sadly say goodbye to our previous POC, Jason Grove, we are delighted to welcome David Wilson as the new Regional MS & OIC Coordinator for the West Midlands Regional Crime Unit.

David retired from his role as DI in Force Intel at West Midlands Police in 2017 and has for the past 3 ½ years worked for CGI, working on the Police National Database. During this time he put together the Organised Crime Group Management training package and delivered it nationally to PSNI, Police Scotland, Met, Merseyside and more.

David also assisted on a variety of intelligence-based contracts for the Government, including:

- National Communications Data Service
- Airport Pass holders Information Distribution (developed around risk-evaluations within airports through staff compromise)
- Organised Crime Mapping via the PND

Despite his achievements working for CGI, David says that he is very happy to be back in law enforcement and is looking forward to getting involved and driving business.

There is no doubt that David's eclectic experience in crime control will serve us all well in the coming months as we continue to tackle the issue of modern slavery with the added challenges brought by the pandemic. Please join us in giving David a warm welcome to the network.

You can contact David using the details below:

E: d.wilson@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

T: 07974 484088



A REQUEST FROM THE SALVATION ARMY

Kathy Betteridge, Director of Anti-Trafficking & Modern Slavery, The Salvation Army

We have noticed that many organisations signposting people to help for victims of modern slavery and human trafficking on their websites and other communications, have still not updated The Salvation Army's referral helpline number to the new 0800 number, or in many cases do not include The Salvation Army's information at all. This includes local partnerships where The Salvation Army is listed as a partner.

Could you please check what information is being published on your organisation's website and include the correct details about how to refer people to our service? We would be very grateful if you could cascade this request to everyone in your internal networks as well to ask them to do the same.

Ideally, we would like organisations to include the following wording:

If you suspect that you or someone you have come across may be an adult victim of modern slavery and in need of help, please contact The Salvation Army's confidential and anonymous referral helpline on 0800 808 3733 – available 365 days a year, 24/7 with interpretation services where needed.



UNDERSTANDING HOMELESSNESS

Homeless Link



As you will already be aware, homelessness continues to be a pervasive issue, particularly during the pandemic and despite the government's efforts to house those affected during the first national lockdown.

Homeless Link is working within the homeless sector to make services better, and with the government to improve the policies that affect people experiencing homelessness even during this most difficult time.

Most recently they have published the below which may be of interest:

- [How we talk about homelessness matters](#) – containing useful links and workshop details on the rhetoric surrounding homelessness
- ['Everyone In 2' essential to protect people sleeping rough during lockdown](#) – exploring the government response to homelessness during the pandemic



If you have any questions about, or would like to contribute to the WMASN newsletter, please contact donna.pryor@westmidlandsantislavery.org

West Midlands Anti Slavery Network Meeting Dates for 2021:

For more information, please contact donna.pryor@westmidlandsantislavery.org

- ❖ 14th January
- ❖ 18th March
- ❖ 13th May
- ❖ 15th July
- ❖ 16th September
- ❖ 18th November



USEFUL LINKS

Modern Slavery Helpline: 08000 121 700

Force Intelligence Bureau (FIB): fib@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

[National Referral Mechanism Guidance](#)

[Digital NRM Form](#)

[Modern Slavery Act Duty to Notify](#)

[Home Office: 2019 UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery](#)

[Human Trafficking Foundation Trafficking Survivor Care Standards](#)

[Recovery Needs Assessment](#)

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