

## Modern Day Slavery

40.3 million people are estimated to be trapped in some form of modern slavery in the world today.

136,000 victims estimated in the UK (according to the Global Slavery Index).

6,993 potential victims found in 2018 (UK).

Modern slavery is an umbrella term for all forms of slavery, trafficking and exploitation.

At the core of this crime is deception. Survivors of modern slavery tell stories of being sold a better life. They are often vulnerable, coming from areas where there is little possibility of work. They are offered a job, a chance to make money and to build a new life for themselves. Those who offer these opportunities may even organise their travel to a different country, controlling every aspect of their trip.

The job they are offered turns out to be a lie and 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, hangs over them and traps them in their situation. Even if their trafficker does not physically control them, a mistrust of authority may stop them from going to the police.

This could be the reality for 136,000 men, women and children in the UK. Modern slavery knows no borders, and people of all ages and races can be victims. The 6,993 potential victims referred to the National Crime Agency in 2018 came from 130 different countries, the most common of which were the UK, Albania, and Vietnam.

Statistics are taken from the Global Slavery Index and the National Crime Agency (UK).

The Clewer Initiative has a Project working with the Church of England in providing awareness of Modern Day Slavery & practical ways of detecting such activity. More information about the Clewer Initiative can be found on their website <https://www.theclewerinitiative.org/>

Other organisations around the country also provide support around this issue such as the Salvation Army who provide accommodation for those who have been 'rescued' from Slavery situations & the Aduvu Project which is Methodist led in the West Midlands.

One practical method of detecting suspected Modern Day Slavery is through the Safe Car Wash app which can be downloaded onto your mobile phones through app stores. This is a means of raising concerns & intelligence for the use of the

authorities & can be used while visiting hand car washes which are in many places of our area.

The app will ask a series of questions related to the indicators of modern slavery and if there is a high likelihood that modern slavery is occurring in the hand car wash, you will be asked to report your concerns to the Modern Slavery Helpline via your phone.

The data the app collects will be anonymised and shared with the National Crime Agency and the Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority, two law enforcement agencies who are leading on efforts to stamp out modern slavery across the UK.

Since launching the Safe Car Wash app in June 2018 we have received over 2000 reports and the app has been downloaded over 8000 times. The app has recently been updated.

In our area The Diocese of Exeter, The Clewer Initiative & Transforming Plymouth have been arranging 2 evening awareness raising sessions in Devon during May. This will be followed by a 2 day Course entitled Hidden Voices: Devon & Cornwall – Help end Modern Day Slavery in your Community. This is being run at Buckfast Abbey from 12noon on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July till 5pm on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July. This is free & can be booked on <https://hiddenvoicesdandc.eventbrite.co.uk>

You may feel that Modern day Slavery only happens in Urban areas or cities but it does take place in our communities – we should be aware of the issues & possible signs – although for us not to actively challenge people or situations but to take notice of our concerns, what we see or notice & we are urged to pass this on.

Dave Watson