A world without slavery

The difference we’re making thanks to your support
Welcome to your 2019 Impact Report

2019 was another successful year tackling modern slavery in the UK. But as well as the impact we’ve made over the past 12 months, the year was one of great challenges, too.

There was the challenge of initiating an emergency appeal to support the UK’s Modern Slavery Helpline and rising demand for our services. We are immensely grateful to our supporters – the individuals, businesses and other organisations whose response to the appeal was amazing, raising more than £500,000 to date.

Thousands contacted the Helpline in 2019, desperately wanting to escape their exploiters, or identifying potential exploitation, or asking for our expert help. So a big thank you to our amazing Helpline staff who continue to do such a wonderful job giving support and hope to some of the most vulnerable in society.

A huge thanks also to my other frontline colleagues who continue their high-quality support to survivors through our safehouses and outreach services, transforming lives scarred by the trauma of exploitation. You can read more about the extraordinary work they do in this report.
2019 also marked the end of our current five-year strategy. It's remarkable to see how far we've come in that time – from launching the Helpline in 2016, to establishing modern slavery awareness training for businesses, statutory agencies and schools; from influencing new government policy, to setting up a children's safehouse pilot project.

By the end of the year, we were preparing our new strategy and making strides towards sustainable funding for the Helpline. Then just as we were finalising our plans, coronavirus struck.

How the world has changed in such a short time. While this report looks back proudly at the work of Unseen in 2019, we must acknowledge the profound impact of coronavirus on both our mission and the wider charity sector.

A significant loss in planned income as a result of the pandemic means, among other things, that we're having to adapt our new 2020-2025 strategy, putting some of our more ambitious plans on hold over the short term, while we focus on a recovery plan for the charity.

Despite these setbacks, we are as committed as ever to a world without slavery and, with your continuing support, we are as prepared as possible to meet the challenges of the year ahead.

All the evidence shows that our work is needed more than ever, especially since the outbreak of coronavirus, so please read on, remain inspired by what we are doing together – and help us keep up the fight against modern slavery in 2020.

Thank you for your support.

Andrew Wallis
CEO, Unseen
Modern slavery and human trafficking in 2019

The problem we’re tackling thanks to your support

52% Of cases related to labour exploitation, the highest type of exploitation in every UK country, accounting for 73% of reported potential victims in England, 49% in Scotland, and 92% in both Wales and Northern Ireland

52% Annual increase in potential victims of UK slavery since 2018, according to Government figures, a record high
£3.3 to £4.3 billion
Estimated annual cost of modern slavery to the UK

4,739
Potential victims indicated by our UK Modern Slavery Helpline

45%2
Proportion of victims of modern slavery in the UK who are children

9,236
The number of contacts made to the Modern Slavery Helpline, up 15% on 2018

1 www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/02/number-of-potential-modern-slavery-victims-in-uk-rises-by-52
2 National Crime Agency
Supporting

Our safehouses and outreach services have supported hundreds of survivors of modern slavery – helping them recover safely and develop resilient, independent lives. In 2019, we supported more than any other year.
Women’s safehouse

Where can you turn when you have no money to get away from the people exploiting you, and little understanding of how to get help? How do you break free of the controlling, often violent, environment that might be all you have known for years?

One of the important aspects of our work is providing safe places for people escaping exploitation, and help to rebuild their lives – from providing them with immediate support such as emergency medical care and ongoing trauma counselling, to those things many of us take for granted, such as being registered with a doctor’s surgery or dental practice.

Take Alicja, for example, who escaped to the safehouse after years of sexual exploitation. At first, she was scared to even come into the house, had extreme anxiety and struggled with sleeping. We supported her to get counselling to deal with the emotional impact of her experience, and she has gradually begun to feel safer and make friends in the house. She is now attending IT classes to help her find a job.

Tania, another resident, had been working as a farm labourer earning as little as 30p a day before she arrived at the safehouse. After counselling, we supported her to find volunteering positions in a local charity shop and a museum, where she could indulge her passion for history.

By the end of 2019, Tania felt ready to move on and live with a friend in another area. She keeps in touch, calling us from time to time to say hello and to tell us how she’s getting on.

176

Women supported in 24/7 safehouse accommodation over eight years, 20 in 2019 from 12 different nationalities*

*Some survivors stay in support for multiple years. The number of survivors supported to date is cumulative but the annual figure includes those who may have been supported for longer than a year.
“So many survivors arrive unable to trust anyone, experiencing frequent flashbacks and living in constant fear. Our aim is to give them their lives back by providing an environment that is welcoming, safe and supportive”

Martha, Safehouse Manager

48% Engaged with education, 10% were supported to secure employment and 24% participated in volunteering

100% Reported increased feelings of safety when interviewed in 2019
Men’s safehouse

Adrian was forced into prostitution, Jonas experienced routine violence at the construction sites where he was made to work. Like those we support at our women’s safehouse, those being supported at our men’s safehouse have also experienced forced labour, domestic servitude, and sexual and criminal exploitation. To a trafficker, gender doesn’t matter.

Once at the safehouse men are supported to get counselling and therapies to help them deal with what they have been through. We also provide opportunities for them to learn new skills and have new experiences. For example, we provide English lessons, wellbeing support, photography workshops and an in-house gym for exercise sessions. This year we supported a client to get his forklift driver’s qualification.

We also recognise the importance of developing peer relationships and having opportunities outside the safehouse – this year survivors participated in social groups with other survivors, summer trips and a Christmas party.

Moving on from support is an important part of the journey and this year we had successful, planned moves into long-term secure accommodation and supported one individual with his dream to return to his home country.

46

Men supported over four years, 14 in 2019 from 13 different nationalities*

*Some survivors stay in support for multiple years. The number of survivors supported to date is cumulative but the annual figure includes those who may have been supported for longer than a year.
“I wish I could always stay in this house. My life is stable and I have a lot to learn from here. It’s a normal house and it feels like home”

Men’s safehouse resident

47% Engaged with education, 12% were supported to secure employment and 30% participated in volunteering

100% Reported increased feelings of safety when interviewed in 2019
Survivors in the community

Our Resettlement, Integration and Outreach (RIO) programme works with survivors in the community, helping them to live safely by themselves and supporting them in all aspects of moving on with their lives outside the safehouse, such as dealing with ongoing trauma, finding a job or training.

The survivors we work with are further along their recovery journey than those living in our safehouses, one result being that we place particular emphasis on supportive peer relationships. This year we have set up monthly social groups where survivors and their children can come together outside of formal support sessions.

Other activities have included craft sessions, visits to local museums and wildlife parks, and a Jujutsu self-defence course. Said one Jujutsu attendee: “In 17 years, I could not sleep. I was surprised when I was able to sleep for the first time after the first session. I’ve now stopped being paranoid when I go outside.”

RIO also offers vocational activities. In 2019, we took three clients for barista training at Manumit Coffee in Cardiff.

People supported over seven years, 87 in 2019*

*Some survivors stay in support for multiple years. The number of survivors supported to date is cumulative but the annual figure includes those who may have been supported for longer than a year.
67%
Engaged with education, 40% were supported to secure employment and 32% participated in volunteering

“It was a good opportunity for me to know all different types of coffee beans,” said one survivor, a woman from Kurdistan. “This has given me a chance to find a job more easily in a coffee shop in the future.”

82%
Said they felt increasingly able to make positive choices
Equipping

We equip healthcare workers, the police, frontline agencies and businesses with training, advice, and resources to tackle modern slavery and better identify and support potential victims.
Modern slavery training for businesses and statutory bodies

Current business and economic models have resulted in millions of people trapped in situations of forced labour and exploitation. Through strong collaborations, we are raising awareness with businesses, local authorities, policing, health workers and housing providers so more people know the signs of modern slavery and what to do.

In 2019, our training offer expanded to include tailored e-learning and face-to-face training for businesses.

With Nestle, for example, we trained 85 staff from procurement, human resources, and the third-party supplier team. The three-hour sessions used virtual reality headsets to help them understand and identify modern slavery, and what they should do if they have concerns. One participant said, “It was the best training I’ve had in 25 years’ of working for Nestle.”

Our training also encourages participants to discuss risk areas, mitigation strategies and possible ways to improve and strengthen their overall approach.

Frontline training is also key. One participant said, “It made me think about all the people I have probably come into contact with who might be slaves, and that I’ve not done anything about.” Said one health worker trainee, “It will make me think more, and act.”
1,840 People trained

60 Training sessions
Spotlight – anti-slavery training in schools

We continued to deliver our interactive schools programme, Spotlight, which aims to highlight the risks of sexual and criminal exploitation, to prevent young people from getting involved in harmful situations. We delivered eight Spotlight sessions to 840 students in Bedfordshire and Bristol.

95% Of students had an understanding of modern slavery and who it can affect

60% Had an increase in knowledge of modern slavery

98% Of students viewed the training as a positive experience
Anti-slavery partnerships – collaboration is key

Unseen recognises that we cannot achieve our vision of a world without slavery alone. Working with partners across business, health services, the police, and other charities is vital. Key to this approach are the anti-slavery partnerships (ASPs) we have established.

In 2019, we continued to chair the South West Regional and Bedfordshire ASPs, and set up the Eastern Region ASP.

Through our work with the South West ASP:

- We trained more than 150 frontline staff in Devon and Cornwall who work with homeless people, teaching them to spot the signs of exploitation, keep themselves safe and how to report concerns.
- Two exploiters were convicted in Bristol for keeping a man in domestic servitude.

Through our work with the Bedfordshire ASP:

- We agreed a pan-Bedfordshire communications campaign to raise awareness of the breadth and scale of modern slavery across the county.
- We supported on-the-ground law enforcement activity to safeguard vulnerable individuals.
Influencing
government and society

Our advocacy work aims to influence legislation, policy and consumer choices – from working behind the scenes with ministers, to raising modern slavery issues in the media. Here are some highlights from 2019.
Influencing

- We gave evidence that was used in the High Court and resulted in a change of Government policy that will assist with better identification of victims of trafficking.

- We chaired the Modern Slavery Strategic Implementation Group – Transparency in Supply Chains and are members of the Prevent and Protect and Victim Support groups. These groups are the liaison between the Home Office and key stakeholders to implement the UK’s modern slavery strategy, monitor the progress the Government is making in tackling modern slavery and deal with current issues as they arise.

- We took part in many Westminster and Government briefings and input to various policy and legislative reviews, such as the UK Government’s first Transparency in Supply Chains statement and the governmental roundtable on establishing a new single enforcement body for employment rights.

- We had high-level engagement with the devolved governments of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales with a view to improving the response to modern slavery and human trafficking in those countries.
○ We presented to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) conferences in Vienna and Warsaw, to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg and the Consumer Goods Forum in Berlin speaking on transparency in supply chains and the role of data in tackling modern slavery and human trafficking.

○ We input into modern slavery training for Kenyan and Ugandan MPs, as part of work with the Commonwealth Association.

○ We took part in multiple speaking engagements to business, the Third Sector and the general public.

○ We took part in Converge Conferences (Europe and International), speaking to General Compliance Executives about modern slavery and human trafficking and transparency in supply chains.

○ We acted as an adviser to Tech Against Trafficking.
UK Modern Slavery Helpline
08000 121 700

The UK-wide Modern Slavery Helpline is a confidential and independent helpline providing information, advice and guidance to potential victims, businesses, statutory agencies, and the public about any modern slavery issue.

Helena’s story

Helena was brought to the UK from South Asia by her exploiters, where she had her passport and jewellery taken from her. She was then “sold” to a family who forced her into a marriage, where she was regularly beaten. A friend helped her escape but her exploiters found out and chased them in a car. The friend contacted the Helpline as the situation unfolded, and we got in touch with the police, simultaneously directing Helena and her friend to the nearest police station, where they were expecting them. Helena was then taken to a safehouse.

7,073 calls

2,163 Contacts through our website and app

31% Increase in contacts from 2018

17,528 Potential victims indicated since its launch in October 2016, 4,739 in 2019
Expertise

The data and information we gather from our calls means we are also able to provide expert knowledge to the police and other agencies on where and how people are being exploited.

Open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, the Helpline takes calls from right across the UK and in some circumstances internationally. It receives no Government funding.

The Helpline can liaise with callers in more than 200 languages. Callers who are potential victims are offered help to connect with law enforcement agencies, get out of a situation and stay safe. We also offer emotional support, and our close connections with partners means we can also provide help getting social, legal and housing services.

What’s more, the data and information we gather from our calls is analysed to provide expert knowledge to the police and other agencies on where and how people are being exploited, stopping slavery in its tracks.

“The expert knowledge provided by the Helpline to law enforcement agencies and partners not only helps victims get the support they need but also provides vital information to the police, helping to bring the perpetrators to justice”

Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer
Devon and Cornwall Police - National Policing Lead for Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime
Evelyn’s story

Evelyn grew up in Kenya. She had a happy childhood and trained to be hairdresser. She was working in her local town when she fell in love with her husband-to-be.

But after they got married, Evelyn’s husband was no longer her loving partner, but began stopping her from going out and seeing friends, and abusing her physically and emotionally.

Evelyn started to look for ways out and met a lady who offered her the opportunity to work in England. Her husband agreed that she should go if she sent money home. All the travel, documents and the job were to be arranged by this lady and Evelyn thought she had found a route out of her abuse. Little did she know it was about to continue in a country far away from home.

When she arrived in the UK she was met from the airport as she expected – yet the job fair she was due to attend and the job she had been promised never materialised. The people that picked her up forced her into domestic servitude and sexually exploited her. She was forced to cook, clean and look after children, unable to leave the home for five years.

Evelyn saw her opportunity and bravely took it when her exploiter left a window open one day. She was found wandering and distressed in a park, where a member of the public found her and got help.

Evelyn is now in our women’s safehouse and on her journey towards recovery. She is regaining her confidence and a sense of hope. She has been supported to get much-needed healthcare and most importantly help to start the process of family reunification.

Evelyn hopes to participate in further education ahead of starting to work in the health and beauty sector.
“Unseen does fabulous work to combat modern slavery. Its safehouses, Helpline and work in the community are not a nice to have, but an essential part of a civilised society, supporting extremely vulnerable people”

Levison Wood
Explorer, writer and photographer, and Unseen Patron
Thank you

A huge thanks to the following organisations for their valuable contribution to our work in 2019

Garfield Weston Foundation
The Swire Charitable Trust
National Lottery Community Fund
29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
Odin Charitable Trust
Emmanuel Kaye Foundation
Henry Smith Charity
Lloyds Bank Foundation
Quartet Community Foundation
The Fairfield Charitable Trust
People’s Postcode Trust
The Burden Trust
The Pilgrim Trust
The Nisbet Trust
The Rayne Foundation
The Wixamtree Trust
John James Bristol Foundation
Peter Stebbings Memorial Charity
Schroder Charity Trust
Bristol City Council
Avon & Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner
Modern Slavery Police Transformation Unit
Vodafone Foundation
Amazon
BT
Tesco
Nestle
Convercent
NBC Universal International
PMP Recruitment
The Waves Group
TISCreport
Shambala Festival
Estrella Green
Mark Garbers
Financial Summary

Expenditure

Combined charitable activities: £1,930,604
- 66% Supporting survivors (£1,576,065)
- 11% Equipping stakeholders (£266,700)
- 4% Influencing policy and society (£87,839)

Combined support costs:
- 9% Support costs (£220,888)
- 8% Raising funds (£201,611)
- 2% Governance (£47,861)

Total expended:
£2,400,964

81% Of income spent on charitable activities
For every £1 spent on fundraising in 2019, £6.28 was raised to invest in our work

Income

- 39% Service income (£885,952)
- 25% Trusts and grants (£565,559)
- 21% Corporate income (£469,692)
- 10% Donations and legacies (£231,439)
- 4% Training income (£87,794)
- 1% Trading and other income (£18,294)

Total income: £2,258,730
Leave a legacy
And help us fight modern slavery

When you leave a legacy to Unseen, you are directly helping to change someone’s life. Your gift will go towards expert support for survivors, ensuring their voices are heard to fuel the fight against modern slavery.

Explore your legacy: www.unseenuk.org/leavealegacy
0303 040 2888

www.unseenuk.org     www.modernslaveryhelpline.org

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Registered office: 7 Hide Market, West Street, St Philips, Bristol BS2 0BH. Tel: 0303 040 2888.