



Home Office

Home Office Press Office, Peel Building, 2 Marsham Street London SW1P 4DF

Out of Hours 020 7035 6464 www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre

NEWS RELEASE

10 February 2014

020 7035 3535

HOME OFFICE MINISTER PRAISES SLAVERY CHARITY ON VISIT TO BRISTOL

Home Office Minister, Karen Bradley, visited Bristol today (Monday 10 February) to see first hand the action being taken locally to tackle modern slavery.

The Minister visited Unseen, a local charity established to prevent and provide support to victims of modern slavery, where she met a number of people affected by slavery, staff and CEO Andrew Wallis to learn more about the organisation's projects.

The visit comes as the government is taking a wide range of action to end modern slavery and protect victims through legislation and non-legislative work.

Home Office Minister, Karen Bradley, said:

“Modern slavery is an evil in our midst and the Home Secretary and I are determined to stamp it out.

“We are taking action against this abhorrent crime on a number of fronts. The National Crime Agency is leading an enhanced and co-ordinated response to targeting trafficking gangs, we are increasing protection for victims, and we have published a modern slavery Bill.

“All this is a good start but we need everyone to play a part – I am grateful for the vital work carried out by Unseen to help consign slavery to the history books where it belongs.”

As well as directly helping victims, Unseen works to raise awareness of the issue of slavery and runs bespoke training sessions for frontline personnel such as police and local authorities. Projects include Bristol's Anti-Trafficking Partnership and other joint-working initiatives alongside local law enforcement teams.

ENDS

1. One of the projects visited by the Minister was WATER (Women's Anti-Trafficking Emergency Refuge), secure accommodation for women aged 18 and over who are classified as survivors of slavery for the purpose of sexual exploitation and domestic servitude, run by Unseen.
2. Unseen opened their first safe house in 2011, supporting 35 women a year.
3. Unseen's CEO Andrew Wallis has been consulted during the evidence sessions to inform the contents of the draft Bill.
4. The Modern Slavery Bill will consolidate into a single act the offences used to prosecute slave drivers. It will also introduce Trafficking Prevention Orders, to restrict the activity and movement of convicted traffickers and stop them from committing further offences, and a new Anti-Slavery Commissioner to hold law enforcement and other organisations to account.
5. The draft Bill is currently being subjected to Pre-Legislative Scrutiny with the aim of publishing a Bill in the spring that could be passed and on the statute books by the end of the Parliament.
6. The White Paper entitled draft Modern Slavery Bill can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-modern-slavery-bill>
7. Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking, slavery, forced labour and domestic servitude. In 2012, 1186 potential victims of human trafficking were referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). Of these, 371 were children. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-inter-departmental-ministerial-group-report-2013> *(to be updated with new figures)*
8. For media enquiries including bids for interviews, contact Jon Street at the Home Office Press Office on 020 7035 3853.