

Anti-trafficking organisation Unseen comment on latest human trafficking figures released by NCA

February 18th 2014

Today sees the release of the latest statistics on human trafficking in the UK by the National Crime Agency.

<http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/publications/139-national-referral-mechanism-statistics-2013/file>

The figures show a 47% increase on 2012's statistics overall.

They also reveal a shocking 155% increase on 2012's figures for the sexual exploitation of UK children.

Unseen's CEO Andrew Wallis says, "today's statistics not only give us an indication of the growing problem of human trafficking in the UK, but also shine light on the importance of frontline workers like the police, social services and health workers to be properly trained to pick up on the indicators and know what to do"

"It is essential that we get better at spotting victims of human trafficking, especially children and have a clear process to follow to offer the best possible care and support."

Unseen provide survivor care to victims of human trafficking through its secure accommodation and resettlement project. Unseen are currently fundraising to launch the UK's first accommodation project specifically for trafficked children. Please go to www.unseenuk.org for more information or e-mail Unseen at info@unseenuk.org

Andrew Wallis:

Andrew Wallis, FRSA, is the founder and CEO of Unseen, a charity established to disrupt and challenge modern slavery by bringing safety, hope and choice to survivors. He is the Chairman of the Working Group for the Centre for Social Justice's landmark report: 'It Happens Here: Equipping the United Kingdom to fight modern slavery' which gives a comprehensive road map for government, statutory authorities and business to eradicate slavery in the UK and now acknowledged as the catalyst for the UK's Modern Slavery Bill. He advises and collaborates with statutory agencies and businesses on how to combat and eradicate modern slavery. In 2013 he won the Influencer Award from the Directory for Social Change and was honoured to be elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts in recognition of his work in combatting modern slavery and human trafficking.

He has also worked with politicians to bring the Transparency in UK Company Supply Chains (Eradication of Slavery) Bill before Parliament and was a member of Frank Field MP Review Panel that worked on the Modern Slavery Bill. He works internationally with NGOs and businesses to develop a coordinated response to modern slavery. A member of the UK Government's Inter Departmental Ministerial Group (IDMG) on Human Trafficking and the Chair of the Human Trafficking Joint Strategy Group at the UK's Home Office. He is a member of the EU Civil Society Platform on Trafficking in Human Beings. Works regularly with media outlets such as: BBC News; BBC News 24; Sky News; Local BBC News – Points West; Al Jazeera; CNN International; The Guardian (Print and Broadcast); The Sunday Times; Radio 5 Live; LBC; and BBC World Service

Prior to founding Unseen Andrew had a career in business analysis followed by commercial management in the retail sector with House of Fraser, project management with the University of the West of England and led a church. He currently serves on the board of a number of charities.

Note for editors

Unseen

- Figures released for 2012 by Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) states there were 1,186 reported human trafficking victims in the UK – a 25% increase on 2011's figures. However, this is only the number of victims that chose to report the crime – and, importantly, who have been found – and there is widespread acknowledgement that true figures are hard to come by and could be a lot higher.

- . Unseen's WATER (Women's Anti-Trafficking Emergency Refuge) project is the only safe-house in the South West and is one of only three services in the country offering 24/7 support to victims of human trafficking.
- . For women who have left the safety of our WATER project, we also offer a resettlement service to help them continue on their journey of recovery within their chosen community.
- . Unseen runs a Room Sponsorship Scheme for people to directly support women survivors at our WATER project. For details, go visit www.unseenuk.org/donate/sponsor-a-room
- . The charity was instrumental in setting up an Anti-Trafficking Partnership with Avon & Somerset Police and Bristol City Council, which brings together 22 agencies in fighting human trafficking in the South West, including other NGOS and local government.

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