

## Anti-Slavery Day 18<sup>th</sup> October 2013

### Stop and think. What can you do to help victims of modern slavery?

Help raise awareness of the issue of modern slavery and reach out to support survivors of this crime that sees human life reduced to mere currency; a commodity to be bought and sold.

Slavery is very real and is happening to people in the UK today.

To girls like Manisha...

#### **Manisha's story**

I am from Africa. I am now 19. When I was younger my father used to drink all the time and I never knew my mother as she left me when I was a baby.

I was sent to live with my Aunt in the UK who had promised to get me into a school and look after me.

My Aunt paid for me to come to the UK, but didn't do anything about getting me into a school. Instead I spent my days cooking, cleaning and looking after my Auntie's own two children. I worked non-stop from 6am to 1am each day. I was beaten most days. Then one day my Aunt tried to drown me, but I screamed so loud the neighbours heard my cries and called the Police. I was taken away from my Aunt and brought to Unseen.

I cannot go back home to Africa. I am too scared. My Aunt knows lots of people who would hurt me.

NB: The victim's name and some details have been changed to protect her identity

Bristol based anti-trafficking charity Unseen continues to work with survivors of human trafficking through providing safe accommodation and support services to survivors. Unseen has seen 58 women come through the service in the last two years and is currently increasing its reach to provide an on-going support to survivors as they settle in their chosen community or return home.

Co-founder of Unseen, Kate Garbers adds, "Anti-slavery day is a great opportunity for people to start to make a difference. From getting involved with one of the many events that are taking place across the UK to raise awareness of the issues to directly sponsoring an individual survivor at our safe house."

Unseen runs a Room Sponsorship Scheme for people to directly support women survivors at our WATER (Women's Anti-Trafficking Emergency Refuge) project.

For details, go visit [www.unseenuk.org/donate/sponsor-a-room](http://www.unseenuk.org/donate/sponsor-a-room)

#### **Note for editors**

##### **Unseen**

- . Unseen began in 2008.
- . 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](http://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.

Unseen, P.O. Box 2933, Bristol BS6 9FP  
0303 040 2888  
[info@unseenuk.org](mailto:info@unseenuk.org)  
[www.unseenuk.org](http://www.unseenuk.org)

Registered charity number: 1127620  
Company number: 06754171