

PRESS RELEASE



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For immediate release

Police take on Tough Mudder to raise funds for victims of human trafficking

Avon and Somerset Constabulary's Assistant Chief Constable Sarah Crew and a team of six other courageous police officers and staff are taking on one of the UK's toughest events in order to raise vital funds for Unseen, a local Bristol charity that works with survivors of human trafficking.

The Tough Mudder will take place on 22nd August at Cirencester Park and includes a 10km assault course littered with Army-style obstacles designed to wear competitors down and test their every sinew.

The Rapid Action Team, or RAT Pack as they've called themselves, have been training hard together over the past few months.

Team leader Louise Hutchison said: "None of us have experience of taking on anything like this before, but we have been training hard and are determined to make it through together as one team. We are glad to be raising money for such a great cause, and supporting the fantastic work of Unseen."

Assistant Chief Constable Sarah Crew said: "For the last 5 years I have had the honour of working with Unseen as part of the Anti-Slavery Partnership, raising awareness of people that slavery is happening in our communities and, in so doing, building an intelligence picture, rescuing victims and pursuing perpetrators.

"Without Unseen, I doubt that we would or could have achieved so much. There is a great deal more to do so I am absolutely delighted – yes, really! - to be putting myself through the ordeal of Tough Mudder to raise funds to help them do it. I am also very grateful for dedication - and possible foolhardiness - of my six colleagues from the Operating Model programme team who are doing the same."

The team aims to raise £1,500, which is enough to buy 60 Clothing Packs of essential items for survivors who arrive at Unseen's safe-house with few possessions.

Unseen's fundraiser Rebecca Wingate-Saul is delighted the police team are taking on this challenge for the charity: "Unseen works very closely with Avon and Somerset police and often accompanies officers on welfare visits and operations to ensure any victims of trafficking that are found are given the right support.

"So it's extra special to have a group of officers raising money for the work we do, and we really appreciate their courage in taking on this challenge."

Anyone wishing to help the team reach their fundraising target can donate online at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/ASCratpack>

- Figures released for 2014 by the National Crime Agency state there were 2,340 reported human trafficking victims in the UK – a 34% increase on 2014's figures. However, Home Secretary Theresa May admitted in December that there could be as many as 13,000 victims in the UK at any one time.
- Unseen began in 2008 and works to support survivors, train frontline staff to correctly identify victims, and collaborate with government and other agencies to combat modern slavery in the UK and abroad.
- Unseen's WATER (Women's Anti-Trafficking Emergency Refuge) project is the only safe-house in the South West of England and is one of only three services in the country offering 24/7 support to the most vulnerable female victims of human trafficking. Unseen also offers a resettlement service to help survivors continue 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
- Unseen is currently working towards opening a specialist accommodation project for child victims of trafficking and the first 24-hour safe-house for male victims. For details, go visit <http://www.unseenuk.org/projects/projects-indevelopment>
- The charity was instrumental in setting up an Anti-Trafficking Partnership with Avon & Somerset Police and Bristol City Council, which brings together other NGOs, local government, statutory agencies in fighting modern slavery in the South West.

For queries about Unseen contact Kate Garbers at info@unseenuk.org.

Documents

- Team of seven officers and staff [Team of seven officers and staff](#)
- Unseen logo [Unseen logo](#)



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