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Award winning modern slavery charity [Unseen](#), the organisation behind the recent ‘Let’s Nail it’ ([#letsnailit](#)) campaign, has disputed claims that the campaign is too gimmicky.

From the 16th – 23rd October Unseen, along with our partners [BABTAC](#), encouraged nail salons across the country to take part in ‘Let’s Nail it’ and talk with their customers about the signs of modern slavery. The campaign intended to raise awareness that slavery may be occurring in some of the nail salons the general public use and to educate them about how to spot the signs and report it. A recent poll commissioned by [The Co-Op](#) showed 1 in 5 Britons haven’t heard of modern slavery and two-thirds would not know how to spot the signs. This clearly highlights the need for targeted awareness raising campaigns about this crime.

Designed to highlight the plight of many workers in the nail bar sector, the campaign has come under criticism after police officers in Avon and Somerset painted their nails in support of the cause. But rather than the campaign simply bringing attention to the issue it has in fact galvanised the public into action. As a direct result of one caller’s daughter seeing the media activity surrounding the campaign she decided to call the UK’s [Modern Slavery Helpline](#), operated by Unseen, with concerns about a potential modern slavery situation in her local area.

Unseen’s Executive Director, Justine Currell said ‘this is exactly the kind of response we want from the public – an understanding that people are being exploited in nail bars, and then to have the confidence to pick up the phone and speak to someone confidentially about it.’

Since September, calls to the confidential 24/7 Helpline relating to workers who may be in forced labour situations in nail bars has increased significantly, with 26 contacts received in seven weeks indicating 71 potential victims. Prior to September, the helpline had only received 5 contacts in the preceding eight weeks on the same issue.

Many of the calls into the Helpline about concerns in nail bars cite the physical or psychological state of workers, inappropriate sleeping accommodation provided at business premises, poor working conditions, lack of spoken English, cheap prices, cash-only transactions and concerns of abuse and violence by the ‘boss’.

CEO of Unseen, Andrew Wallis OBE said: ‘Campaigns such as ‘Lets Nail It’ are a vital tool in the fight against modern slavery. We must find innovative, collaborative and creative ways of engaging the public in this topic so they better understand the issue, how it may affect them and know whom to contact if they suspect someone is a victim of this horrendous crime.’



Unseen is delighted that [BABTAC](#), nail salons and the police are all supporting this important initiative to raise crucial awareness of a crime that is hidden in plain sight. We applaud the Police's continued commitment and dedication to fighting this insidious crime through effective collaboration and partnership working.

ENDS

Notes for editors

About Unseen and the Modern Slavery Helpline:

Unseen, is a modern slavery charity that operates from the micro to the macro: by directly supporting survivors of human trafficking and modern slavery through safe accommodation, reintegration and outreach services; equipping frontline staff and businesses with the training and tools to correctly identify victims and take appropriate action; and influencing governments at a strategic level to create long-lasting global solutions to modern slavery. Unseen also operates the UK-wide Modern Slavery Helpline and provides consultancy and training to businesses to help them better understand the issue of modern slavery in supply chains and their own organisation. In 2015, Unseen was awarded, Charity of the Year: with an income of less than £1 million, by Charity Times Awards.

The UK-wide modern slavery helpline and resource centre established in October 2016 provides victims, the public, statutory agencies and businesses with access to information and support on a 24/7 basis. Potential victims who call the helpline can talk to fully trained call handlers who will guide and assist them to access relevant services, including Government-funded support through the National Referral Mechanism. Statutory agencies calling the helpline will be supported in dealing with potential victims and signposted to the range of information, guidance and tools available through the associated resource centre. To raise awareness of the helpline and ensure that it provides the services that potential callers want, we are working closely with a range of diverse stakeholders including law enforcement agencies, non-governmental organisations, businesses, media and faith organisations. In its first year, the Helpline has taken over 3,000 calls indicating 4,000 potential victims and raised over 1,000 referrals to police and local authority safeguarding teams

The indicators of slavery in nail salons being shared by Unseen are:

What does the person look like?



Do they appear withdrawn and neglected or unwilling to engage? Do they appear younger than you'd expect? Are they avoiding eye contact, or is the presence or behaviour of another individual making them appear frightened? Are they resistant to being paid directly?

Is there a manager who takes the money and is overbearing or abusive?

Are there living quarters upstairs or attached to the nail salon? Are the workers brought to work at the same time and dropped off?

What do they sound like?

Do they seem hesitant to talk? Do they speak to others in the salon? Can they speak English? Being unable to speak English can increase people's vulnerability.

How do you feel?

It's difficult to quantify, but trust your gut instinct. Do prices seem 'too good to be true'? Is the vibe you're getting making you feel uncomfortable? If you can't quite put your finger on it but you feel that some of the above indicators are present, you can report suspicions online at:

<https://www.modernslaveryhelpline.org/report> or call the 24/7 confidential helpline on **08000 121 700**.

Press contact details:

For further information or to arrange interviews with Unseen's frontline team please contact the press office.

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Modern Slavery Helpline

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