

"I feel so much more positive now than I used to. I am able to chat to people and laugh again"

Read Peter's full story, page 12



contents

1	2021	in	num	hare
4	/()/	111		

- 6 Supporting survivors
- 6 Unseen's safehouses
- 8 Paula's story
- 10 Unseen in the community
- **12** Peter's story
- 14 Equipping others
- 15 Working with business
- **15** The Drax story
- **16** Training
- 17 Anti-Slavery Partnerships
- 18 Influencing Government and society
- 20 Five years of the Modern Slavery& Exploitation Helpline
- **24** Hui's story
- 26 Thank you to our supporters
- 28 Financial report
- 32 Leave a legacy

Welcome

There's a song called "Optimistic", by African-American music ensemble The Sounds of Blackness, which contains the lyrics:

No matter how hard reality seems Just hold on to your dreams Don't give up and don't give in

That sums up 2021 for us at Unseen – coping with the unpredictability of Covid, the increasingly hostile environment to those fleeing conflict and persecution, and waning political interest in tackling modern slavery. The end of the year saw Russia gearing up for war in Ukraine, with the result that, as I write, there are now thousands, if not millions, more people vulnerable to exploitation across Europe.

Yet despite everything thrown at us, my amazing colleagues have once again continued to over-deliver.

We have supported more survivors than ever, worked with more businesses, and partnered with other NGOs in the UK and globally to bring about transformative change. 2021 saw the launch of our new brand and website, too, both of which were positively received.

This year we celebrated five years of the Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline, which has helped transform the UK's response to one of the world's most profitable crimes.

Our Helpline is not only a lifeline for victims and a confidential place to report concerns, but is now the biggest data set on modern slavery outside of the Government and an important tool for informing local and national approaches to exploitation.

I'm proud of what we've achieved together this year, and delighted to be sharing it with you. We've now embarked on our ambitious new strategy that will take us to 2027. But first, enjoy this look back at our impact in 2021 – a year that moved us that little bit closer to a world without slavery. We remain optimistic.



Andrew Wallis OBE
Unseen CEO

2021 in numbers

51%

increase in the number of modern slavery cases where a potential victim contacted the Helpline themselves

8,468

contacts to Unseen's Helpline

15%

increase in reports of sexual exploitation on the previous year

1,200+

referrals to agencies and support organisations, including the police, local authorities and the Gangmasters' and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) 219

people supported across our safehouses and outreach services - more than any other year and an increase of 80% on 2020

the number of countries from which the Helpline received international calls

> "There are around 100,0001 people in modern slavery in the UK alone. That's at least 100,000 reasons why our work is needed now more than ever"

Natasha Mitra Head of Helpline Services

3,01

potential victims of modern slavery indicated through contacts to our Helpline

¹Centre for Social Justice



unseen's safehouses

Supporting survivors to rebuild their lives remains at the heart of what we do.

One of the ways we support survivors is through our men's and women's safehouses – warm and welcoming environments where people who have experienced high levels of trauma can recoup, feel safe and start the process of recovery.

Forced labour was the highest reported type of exploitation experienced at the women's safehouse, with survivors also reporting sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, and criminal exploitation.

These safehouses are more than a roof over your head. We pride ourselves on the inclusive environment we create, and the transformational support provided by our expert teams.

Our support ranges from practical assistance, such as helping survivors navigate the health system and get legal support for an asylum claim, to group activities such as cooking, sports and wellbeing sessions. This year, residents at the women's safehouse worked with staff to expand the cultivated area in the garden.

As life continued with Covid restrictions, there were limits to what survivors could do and the services they could access, but our teams worked hard to ensure there was as little impact as possible on survivors – helping them access health services and education remotely, for example.

This year, both houses have been refurbished thanks to our generous supporters, and residents played their part too – choosing fresh paint colours for the walls and new furniture where it was needed.

35

men and women supported in Unseen's safehouse accommodation "Our approach to fighting modern slavery is to tackle the symptoms as well as the causes—and that means working closely with survivors to put their lives back together. What they have been through is beyond words"

Rachel Collins-White
Head of Frontline Services

SUPPORTING SURVIVORS



"I just want to work, to earn my own money, feel safe, that no one else wants to hurt me or use me — that is all"

paula's story

When Paula* came to our Women's Safehouse, she had suffered abuse all her life.

"I had no control over where I could go," says Paula. "I had my teeth knocked out by the butt of a gun, and rape and abuse were normal to me."

It's hard to comprehend what a lifetime of this type of treatment can do to a person's mental health. Now aged 30, Paula is only just able to talk about it, but she's held some details back - they're just too painful to retell and therefore relive.

What she did tell us is this. Growing up in her native Nigeria, her mother had to give her up as a baby, so she was brought up by her "aunt". Refused schooling so she could work as a domestic help for her aunt and various families. Paula was denied the carefree life a child should have. Her upbringing was also punctuated by violence and abuse.

When civil unrest broke out, one family helped Paula to escape to the UK. She was 17. However, the British authorities didn't believe her age or her claim for asylum, so she ended up on the streets. Taken in by a man she thought would help her, he soon took advantage of her too, raping her whenever he pleased.

Paula says: "He kept telling me, 'With one phone call you will be gone back to your home country.' I was too scared to report him. I felt it was all my fault; that I was a stupid child."

It was only when Paula was feeling ill (later diagnosed with HIV), that she became visible to medical services and recognised as a victim of slavery. Finally, she had a way out and was referred to our Women's Safehouse.

"When I arrived, I found it surreal and overwhelming. I'd never been anywhere that I could come and go as I please."

As often happens, the lifetime of trauma she had suffered suddenly came rushing to the surface. Regular flashbacks, anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts ensued.

Slavery can manifest itself in many ways. For most women, there is often an element of domestic servitude or criminal exploitation mixed in. It's challenging to unravel the shame, the mistrust and the trauma they've experienced.

Thanks to the support of her Unseen Caseworker, Paula began her asylum claim once again and was successful. She's now attending college, learning English and maths. She's also doing cooking sessions and volunteering with a local charity.

Says Paula: "I just want to work, to earn my own money, feel safe, that no one else wants to hurt me or use me - that is all."

^{*}Name changed to protect identity. Image posed by a model.





Unseen's Outreach service helps put lives back together. We're supporting more survivors than ever before.

Imagine not being able to leave the house because of your fear of what may lie waiting for you, or not being able to negotiate a simple thing like a bus journey or a visit to the doctor.

Unseen's Outreach service provides support to survivors in the community, some of whom will have complex needs. Others, meanwhile, might appreciate a friend who is there at the end of the phone; someone they can spend time with and ask for advice.

Some survivors we're working with in the community might have moved on from one of our safehouses and are being supported in the next stage of their recovery.

Others might already be living independently in the community, in asylum accommodation, or with friends or family; in some cases, they might be homeless. Whatever an individual's circumstances, we are there if they need us.

In 2021, there was a notable change in the level of need for our Outreach support. We almost doubled the number of survivors we work with. Many have families and, in 2021, we worked with 51 children associated with adult survivors.

Our reach has increased too and, thanks to your support, we are now able to cover a much wider area across the South West – from Gloucester in the north and Truro in the south, to Wales in the west and Swindon in the east.

184

men and women supported towards safe and productive lives in the community



"My Caseworker told me that I am safe now, but it was difficult to believe her. Both of my Caseworkers at Unseen have built me up and helped me look to the future... and laugh again"

peter's story

Peter* had been exploited in his home country but managed to escape to the UK.

For many years, Peter hid from his exploiters, refusing to speak to anyone out of fear of being found. His family even reported seeing his traffickers near their home looking for him. Due to worries about his own safety and that of his family, Peter struggled with low moods, anxiety, flashbacks and lack of sleep.

Peter regularly meets with his Unseen Outreach Caseworkers. The various Covid lockdowns meant we had to be creative in our support sessions. Often we went on walks and explored the city where Peter lives. He said it helped him clear his mind.

Integrating into the local community and being around new people doing new things was particularly valuable for Peter, as it helped distract him from any bad thoughts.

Peter made great progress in 2021. We helped him attend the Hindu temple in Bristol, something he had not been able to do for several years, and supported him in opening a new bank account.

Peter also got new glasses and registered at his local library. Recently, he completed a PTSD management course which he says has been hugely beneficial to his mental health. By practising new coping strategies and meditating regularly, Peter says he has been able to feel more like himself.

"I am feeling more positive and inspired by [Unseen's] support to do more things and look after myself more," he says. "When I first met my Caseworker, I was so low I couldn't speak to anyone. I only said a few words to her.

"My Caseworker told me that I am safe now, but it was difficult to believe her. Both of my Caseworkers at Unseen have built me up and helped me look to the future. I feel so much more positive now than I used to. I am able to chat to people and laugh again."

^{*}Name changed to protect identity. Image posed by a model.

EQUIPPING OTHERS

With more than 40 million people estimated to be in slavery worldwide, 21 million of who are in forced labour, tackling exploitation is no mean feat. We will not be able to do it alone. So, part of our approach to this mammoth task is to enable others to join the movement to end slavery for good.

We do this by:

- working closely with businesses
- providing training and resources, such as free materials to download from our website
- supporting efficient collaboration between relevant agencies in the form of anti-slavery partnerships.



working with business

We work with businesses of all sizes and across all sectors, supporting them with strategies to tackle forced labour in their own operations and supply chains.

This work not only provides important income for us but also is recognition that businesses, with their commissioning power and influence, have enormous potential to do good.

Businesses also support us through activities such as fundraising, raising awareness of modern slavery among their client groups and providing pro bono work.

In 2021, this area of our work grew significantly, and the roster of partnerships now includes BT, Salesforce, Achilles, Alcumus, Amazon, Nestlé, Tesco, M&S, John Lewis Partnership, Aldi, The Very Group, Nationwide, NatWest Bank, British Land and Places for People. We are investing in our Business Services and Engagement team to match the growing demand for our services.

Educating the business community is a priority for us. As such, throughout 2021, we have continued to focus on raising awareness of exploitation and offering services that promote genuine understanding of the issue and behaviour change.

Our approach is informed by the unique data from our Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline. Businesses increasingly recognise the value and expertise offered by the Helpline in complex modern slavery cases, and it is now routinely mentioned in the modern slavery statements of many household names, such as Tesco, Sainsbury's and BT.



the drax story

In 2021 we worked with renewable energy group Drax, and their forest product supplier A.W. Jenkinson Transport Ltd, to promote the Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline number and raise awareness of modern slavery. The initiative included training A.W. Jenkinson staff to spot the signs of exploitation and creating giant signage displaying the Helpline number to be carried on their haulage trucks.

training

Unseen trains people to know the signs and how to report them.

Key to our mission is to raise awareness of modern slavery in all parts of society, and training and education continue to play a major role in how we do this.

Having set up a suite of e-learning modules in 2020 to combat the lack of face-to-face opportunities because of the pandemic, 2021 saw us deliver a wide range of virtual sessions online.

Changing our delivery model has supported Unseen to reach thousands of individuals in businesses, statutory agencies, charities and other organisations in 2021. The list includes housing associations, entertainment and gaming organisations, financial institutions, retailers, NHS professionals, policing and staff in local authorities.

We continue to promote our Spotlight sessions to highlight the risks of criminal and sexual exploitation to young people, and in 2021 reached more than 1,000 students and teachers in schools and colleges. Our package has expanded to include lesson plans for young people in key stages 2 and 3.



30,000

people trained in businesses and other organisations in 2021

anti-slavery partnerships

Collaborating is a key way of working for us.

The Anti-Slavery Partnership's (ASP) mission is to support and enable the discovery of, and response to, modern slavery. The partnerships, which exist throughout the UK, do this through a victim-centred, multi-agency approach at a local and regional level. Unseen helped found both the South West ASP and Eastern Region ASP, and coordinates and co-chairs them.

The partnerships remain a central point of contact from which good practice is circulated in the regions, and a place where gaps in practice and provision are identified and addressed.

In the South West in 2021, there was a renewed focus on the role of partner agencies, with the ASP providing guidance and resources, and Unseen staff supporting some local agencies to improve services for survivors.

In the Eastern Region, key initiatives included:

- Establishing regular contact with the Home Office to ensure members are kept informed of relevant developments.
- Awareness-raising with ATLEU (the Government Anti-Trafficking and Labour Exploitation Unit) regarding the effects of legislative changes (such as leave to remain).
- Initiating a project to develop an understanding of, and map, the Eastern Region's response to incidents and threats of modern slavery, including the support services offered. This was with the aim of identifying gaps in current service provision and coming up with solutions to ensure they are filled.

INFLUENCING GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY

Unseen is a leading voice in the anti-slavery sector, advising the Government and advocating for survivors. Our work with the media is vital to drive reporting to the Helpline, encourage support for our activities, and raise awareness of modern slavery and human trafficking across society.

a taste of what we did in 2021



- After it emerged that the NHS might have procured PPE produced by forced labour in China, we were part of a group of charities that successfully campaigned to ban the NHS from buying goods tainted by modern slavery. This is a huge win for our sector and one of the most significant steps forward in anti-slavery legislation since the Modern Slavery Act of 2015.
- We were part of a coalition of anti-slavery groups who made a series of recommendations to world leaders meeting at the UK G7 summit in Cornwall, to transform trade rules to better deal with forced labour. The initiative drew a joint response from trade ministers, who acknowledged concerns about the issue and made a commitment to "further enhancing clarity and predictability for businesses". It's a step in the right direction but we, and the rest of the sector, will be keeping up the pressure to ensure the G7 delivers on its promise.
- As an authority on modern slavery and human trafficking, in 2021 we took part in many Westminster and Government briefings and provided input to various policy and legislative reviews, including the Home Office's modern slavery strategic review.

- We set up a new Policy & Research unit to ensure all our recommendations for improved support and identification of victims, and prevention of exploitation, are backed up by sound evidence.
- We were a leading voice calling for significant amendments to the new Nationality and Borders Act, which could lead to more people being trapped in exploitation.

Despite media coverage and extensive support for our amendments across Parliament, we were unsuccessful in achieving the amendments we were asking for in the Act. We did, however, secure some concessions such as better protections for children and 12 months of tailored support for confirmed victims of trafficking. We are yet to see the impact of the new Act but will be monitoring the situation closely and will continue to draw attention to the potentially devastating effect on victims.

- For Anti-Slavery Day 2021, the biggest day of the year for our sector, Unseen coordinated an unprecedented campaign involving more than 20 anti-slavery groups. Together we called for survivors, drawing on their lived experiences, to be included in any new initiatives to combat trafficking and exploitation.
- We spoke at the Financial Crimes World Forum and, in the UK, worked with financial crime consultants Themis on initiatives to raise awareness of modern slavery in the financial sector. In recognition of the value of this work, Unseen's CEO won the Themis Public Sector Anti-Financial Crime Pioneer award.

"The Government's 'hostile environment' immigration policy is at odds with its ambition to root out modern slavery. It focuses on a person's right to be in the UK rather than spotting the signs of exploitation"

Unseen CEO Andrew Wallis, Guardian Opinion, 22 October 2021

campaigning for change

In March 2021, we worked with Leicester Council to raise awareness of the Helpline among textile workers in the city. This included designing posters and leaflets that were delivered to thousands of local addresses and arranging for the Helpline number to be printed on 160,000 pharmacy bags in local chemists.

For our County Lines campaign in June, we commissioned an opinion poll that revealed a worrying

lack of awareness of this form of child trafficking. We used this insight to develop a press and social media campaign to promote an online guide explaining the issue and what the public can do about it.

Through campaigning efforts like these, and other activities such as media coverage of our Helpline's Annual Assessment, there were more than 1 billion opportunities to see our messages in 2021¹.

¹ Figure includes 911,821,088 reach on websites and the print press. A conservative estimate of the broadcast coverage we are aware of receiving in 2021 takes the total figure to well over 1 billion. Reach estimates the potential views of any particular article based on the number of visitors to the specific source on both desktop and mobile.

FIVE YEARS OF THE MODERN SLAVERY & EXPLOITATION HELPLINE



we're here when you need us, 24/7

2021 marked the fifth year of operation for the UK-wide Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline. Over the past five years, we have consistently provided a free, confidential and independent channel for potential victims, businesses, statutory agencies and the public to get information, advice and support, or report concerns.

Potential victims contacting the Helpline are offered help to consider their options: accessing crisis assistance; safety planning; emotional support; help with access to critical social and legal services; and help to connect with law enforcement agencies to get out of a situation and stay safe.

We also provide technical advice and support to health professionals, police, local authorities, businesses and other NGOs that support vulnerable people. The Helpline remains the single point of contact for many Government-led and partner-led modern slavery-related campaigns. For example, for Anti-Slavery Day in October 2021, Police Scotland installed Unseen's App on all 17,000 officers' mobile devices.

Our data is used by governments, businesses, frontline services and other charities to inform anti-slavery strategies. In 2021, for example, we presented to 10 regional Anti-Slavery Partnerships, to highlight findings from our data for each region and review Helpline services available in the area.

To improve our data gathering we have been investing in key initiatives to expand and enrich services. In 2021 we participated in the Tech Against Trafficking Accelerator, a unique opportunity to benefit from expert support from leading data scientists and technologists from Microsoft, Amazon Web Services (AWS), BT and Salesforce.

We also share our expertise, such as operating models, to help other organisations improve their approach to combatting modern slavery and exploitation. In 2021, we delivered expert training to Vietnam's human trafficking hotline, and offered webinars and key input at events across the UK.

Despite the Covid pandemic, we continued to remain open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. And, thanks to your support, such as helping us surpass the fundraising target of the 2021 Christmas appeal, the Helpline is now on a more stable financial footing than in previous years.

FIVE YEARS OF THE HELPLINE IN NUMBERS

23,866

potential victims of modern slavery identified

18,468

referrals and signposts to other agencies and support organisations

37,986

contacts to the Helpline

"The landscape of exploitation is constantly evolving, presenting new risks for vulnerable individuals and new challenges in our response to complex and often hidden criminality and abuse. During the last year, the Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline has continued to deliver essential guidance to those who are concerned about potential exploitation through intelligent and effective signposting and information"

Dame Sara ThorntonOutgoing UK Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner



Hui was initially too scared to say what had happened to him. When we explained this to the authorities, they changed their decision

hui's story

Hui*, a Chinese national, called Unseen's Helpline from an immigration removal centre after he had been given a deportation notice. He explained through a Mandarin interpreter that he had been trafficked to the UK and warned he would be killed if he ever told anyone what had happened to him. Because of this, Hui had not disclosed his true situation to the Home Office.

With Hui's consent, the Helpline Advisors referred him to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) so that they could file an application to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) – the Government's mechanism for supporting victims of modern slavery.

The Helpline Advisors also signposted Hui to four different organisations that provide advice to people in his situation in detention or removal centres. During this time, Hui showed symptoms of trauma that significantly affected his mental and physical health.

Following multiple referrals from the Helpline, UKVI reported that Hui had received a negative reasonable

grounds decision, meaning he would not receive support or officially be identified as a victim of human trafficking.

However, the Helpline advised UKVI that Hui was initially too scared to disclose what had happened to him and explained to them how they could contact the decision-makers for his NRM application with this new information.

It was what Hui needed and he later contacted us to say he had been given a positive reasonable grounds decision, giving him access to services as a potential victim of human trafficking.

^{*}Name changed to protect identity. Image posed by a model.

thank you

We rely on the support of many organisations and individuals to do our vital work. A huge thanks to the following for their contribution in 2021.

Corporate and institutional funders

Achilles Aldi

Amazon Barrettine

Blue Bear Coffee

Boohoo

Bristol City Council Fund

British Land British Telecom Burges Salmon

Cambridgeshire Community

Foundation

Chartered Accountants' Livery

Charity
Comic Relief
Convercent

Dandia Charitable Trust

Drax Dyson Entain

Eversheds Sutherland

Fleet Caravans

Four Winds Charitable Trust Garfield Weston Foundation GF Eyre Charitable Foundation Heart of Bucks Community

Foundation

Hertfordshire PCC Action Fund Home Office Modern Slavery

Prevention Fund

JD Sports

John James Bristol Foundation John Lewis and Waitrose Kent Community Foundation Leonard Laity Stoate Charitable

Trust M&S

Macfarlanes Freddie Smith Trust Margaret Rolfe Charitable Trust

Marsh Charitable Trust Medlock Charitable Trust Morel Charitable Trust

Nat West

National Lottery Community Fund

Nationwide NBCUniversal

Nestlé Next

Odin Charitable Trust Places for People

PMP

Quartet Community Foundation

Roy Proctor Foundation

Sainsburys

Sky

Souter Charitable Trust

Sport England Inequalities Fund

Swire Charitable Trust

Tesco

The Charles Jacob Charitable Trust

The Co-op

The Henry Smith Charity

The Pentwyn Trust

The Pilgrim Trust
The Waves Group
Ultimate Recruitment

Very

Wellcome Trust

Wixamtree Charitable Trust

Individuals

Angela Spreadbury

Ani Magill Anna Bibby

Annabel Du Boulay

Ben Eyre
Fiona Canning
Gerard McQuade
Harriet Calfo

Hugh & Hollie Porter Jasmine Chadwick Jonathan Kittow

Kate Bird
Katrina Moss
Lawrence Barnard

Matt Wood Mike Goetz

Rosemary Johnson Sophie-Rose Holt Tom & Rosie Riley



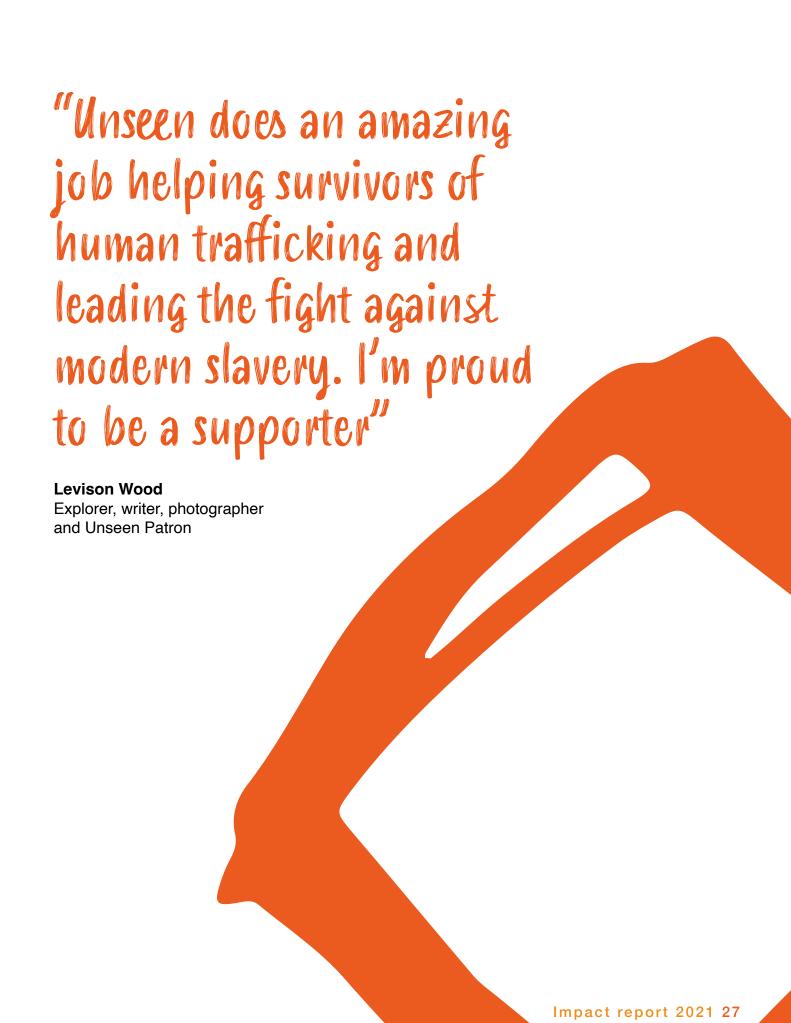












income

Service income **45%** £1,096,180

Trusts and grants **18% £437,433**

Corporate income 11% £267,082

Donations and legacies 11% £260,616

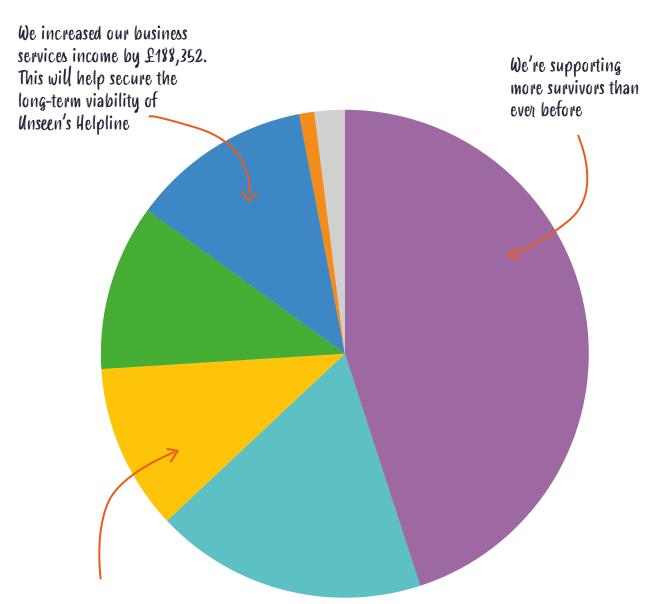
Business services 12% £299,044

Coronavirus Job
Retention Scheme

1%
£36,270

Trading and other income 2% £59,823

Total Income £2,456,448



Corporate partners donate through their businesses, employee fundraising, pro-bono support for various aspects of our work, and donating products/services as gifts in kind

Our total income for the year increased by £134,914 or 6% on the previous period

expenditure

Combined charitable activities: £1,719,673

Supporting survivors

61% £1,358,930

Equipping stakeholders

10% £232,262

Influencing society

6%

£128,481

Combined support costs: £526,204

Raising funds

9%

£195,713

Support costs

13%

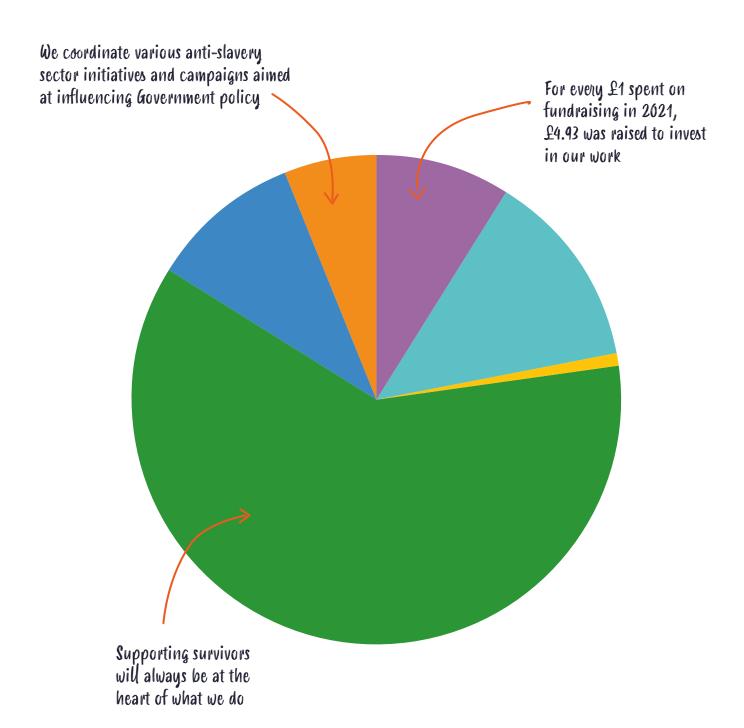
£302,437

Governance

1%

£28,055

Total expended £2,245,878



Total expenditure decreased by £8,010 compared to the previous year. 70% of our income was spent on charitable activities



*Name changed to protect identity. Image posed by a model.



unseenuk.org

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