

## Press release

For immediate release

# Bristol anti-slavery charity offers chance to double donations to its Helpline at no extra cost

- Bristol-based anti-slavery charity Unseen is offering supporters a way to double their donations at no extra cost, as part of the Big Give Christmas Challenge
- All donations go to Unseen's national Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline, a lifeline for people trying to escape trafficking and other forms of modern slavery
- All donations will be doubled from midday Tuesday 29 November to midday Tuesday 6 December, at no extra cost
- To donate visit: [bit.ly/UnseenBigGive2022](https://bit.ly/UnseenBigGive2022)

Bristol-based charity Unseen is offering people the chance to double their donations to its national Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline at no extra cost to the giver.

The initiative is part of the Big Give Christmas Challenge, the UK's largest online match-funding scheme, which runs for one week only from 12pm (midday) on Tuesday 29 November to 12pm on Tuesday 6 December.

All donations go directly to Unseen's Helpline, a free, UK-wide service offering victims of human trafficking and modern slavery vital support, 24/7, 365 days a year.

Since its launch in 2016, the Helpline has indicated nearly 24,000 potential victims of modern slavery.

The service is totally confidential, available in more than 200 languages and provides data that helps governments, police, businesses, and other charities with their approach to tackling slavery.

According to Government figures, there are around 10,000 people caught up in slavery in the UK. Experts, however, put the figure at more than 100,000\*.

As the cost-of-living crisis worsens, the charity fears these numbers will increase, putting greater pressure on its Helpline. In the first half of 2022 the service saw a 13.5% increase in calls for help, compared to same period in 2021.

Says Natasha Mitra, Unseen's Head of Helpline Services: "The cost-of-living crisis is pushing more people into poverty where they are at greater risk of modern slavery and exploitation. We are seeing a growing need for our services and are asking for people's support to help us meet this demand.

"We rely solely on donations from the public to keep the Helpline going, so I urge people to spare what they can this Christmas. Every pound donated goes towards our Helpline being there for people trapped in unbelievably cruel situations."

Unseen will use the donations to expand its Helpline services, including recruiting and training new specialist call advisors and funding its translation and interpreting costs.

To make a donation, please go to [bit.ly/UnseenBigGive2022](https://bit.ly/UnseenBigGive2022) after 12pm (midday) on Tuesday 29 November.

## **Notes to editors**

For all press enquiries and interviews, contact 0303 040 2888 (out of hours 07943 498239) [media@unseenuk.org](mailto:media@unseenuk.org)

### **Unseen's Helpline in action – linh's story**

When Linh started working in a family home in Leicestershire, she couldn't have imagined she would be trapped in a life of domestic servitude.

Aged 32, Linh was forced to cook, clean and look after children, morning until night. She had no day off and was paid a pittance.

Unable to leave, she became a prisoner in the house, her every step watched by CCTV. Visits to her family in Vietnam, where her two children lived, were strictly prohibited.

For Linh, this was her life for the next five years.

Exhausted and emaciated, one morning when her exploiter was out, Linh took the brave decision to share her story with a compassionate member of staff at the local supermarket. Concerned, the shop assistant immediately called the Helpline.

Gina, the Helpline Advisor who dealt with Linh's case, recalls: "When Linh reached out for support, she was disoriented and scared, and desperately wanted out of her situation.

"She had children that she'd been unable to see for years and was afraid for their wellbeing. Arranging a timely extraction with the police was critical for Linh's safety."

Following her escape, the Helpline linked Linh to all the right support and, crucially, ensured she had somewhere safe to live.

### **About Unseen**

Unseen is working towards a world without slavery. We provide safehouses and support in the community for survivors of trafficking and modern slavery. We also run the UK Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline, and work with communities, business, governments, other charities and statutory agencies such as the police and NHS to stamp out slavery for good.

[www.unseenuk.org](http://www.unseenuk.org)

**About the Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline**  
**08000 121 700**

- The Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline is part of the leading anti-slavery charity Unseen, [www.unseenuk.org](http://www.unseenuk.org)
- It is confidential and independent, providing information, advice and guidance to potential victims, businesses, statutory agencies such as the NHS and police, and the public about any modern slavery issue.
- The Helpline is free to use, can take calls in more than 200 languages, and operates 24/7, 365 days a year.
- People can also contact the Helpline via the website and the Unseen App.
- The Helpline is funded by grants from trusts, businesses, fellow charities and other organisations, and donations from the general public.

### **About the Big Give**

The Big Give is a registered charity that runs the Christmas Challenge, an annual match-funding campaign which raises millions of pounds for good causes.

[www.thebiggive.org.uk](http://www.thebiggive.org.uk)

### **Ends**

\*Centre for Social Justice, It Happens Here: [https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/CSJ\\_Slavery\\_Full\\_Report\\_WEB5.pdf](https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/CSJ_Slavery_Full_Report_WEB5.pdf)