



A NETWORK OF AGENCIES TACKLING MODERN SLAVERY IN THE WEST MIDLANDS AND BEYOND

FOREWORD

Robin Brierley, Executive Director, West Midlands Anti Slavery Network

Time has absolutely flown by since our last newsletter, yet it seems so much has happened since I last wrote.

The most important thing for us since our last newsletter has been the successful proposal to the Lottery for funding for our SafePlace which we are so pleased and proud to have received. This funding will start on the 1st of July and is for three years which has been absolutely amazing news for all our team and partners. At our next network meeting on the 15th of July, we will have a presentation from the SafePlace team and will include their work, findings, and challenges since inception. It has been a huge learning curve for all of us, but it has also been extremely successful and the feedback from our service users brings a tear to your eye sometimes. There have been challenges and they include ensuring that the service is known about by those front-line practitioners who identify potential victims in the first instance, but we are getting there it just takes time in such a large Police Service region. We have just received our independent evaluation on the service – we are very pleased with the findings and will publish a redacted version in the future.

By now you will have received a copy of our anti-racism declaration document which outlines our plans for a survey to all network members of which the results will inform an action plan. This has been a year in the planning and the team have worked very hard to ensure we get this right so that anti-racism is embedded in all that we do including our recruitment processes. It was also extremely important to ensure it was sustainable as opposed to it being a one-off piece of work that then fades in time. I have now seen the completed survey, and this will be coming out imminently, you should have received it by the time you receive this newsletter. I'm very pleased with the outcome and I really hope that it's received in the manner of which we send and that you feel you are able to complete it. Your responses will inform an action plan, so I am really interested in what your experiences have been and the challenges that you have faced. I do believe this work will make a difference to the way in which we work in the future.

We will be speaking about this work at the **One Year On: Race Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Anti-Trafficking Sector** BME Anti-Slavery Network (BASNET) & The Human Trafficking Foundation invite you to join our online conference to mark the launch of the Race Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan for the UK Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking sector. **15th July, 1PM - 3PM**. You can sign up [HERE](#)

Our next network meeting is on the 15th of July and will be via Teams again, but we are looking at the one after that being in person and via Teams for those unable to attend. I think like all our other meetings the attendance via Teams went up during Covid for obvious reasons so we would like to retain those higher numbers at network meetings in the future. Although we miss the in person networking the chat facility

in Teams seemed to be a great way for people to connect and share information so we would like to ensure we don't lose that benefit. Any thoughts on this are most welcome.

Lastly, we are already planning with our partners including the OPCC, VRU, PH England, Local Authorities and our Third Sector organisations for Anti-Slavery Day this year. A draft format is the PH approach to Modern Slavery based on the recent work by the IASC, PH England and Dr Liz Such. We are looking at exploring what this looks like across all agencies in the West Midlands and what are the challenges. The subject seems to be a natural next step after the publication last month. For those who haven't yet seen this a link is [here](#)

I hope you enjoy and benefit from our newsletters, any ideas on the format or content are most welcome.

Robin Brierley, Executive Director

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West Midlands Anti Slavery Network SafePlace Update

March saw an incredibly high number of referrals to the National Referral Mechanism in the West Midlands with over double the number of referrals for men as usual. This meant that referrals to SafePlace were high too. Our team are proud to say that since March we have directly supported 6 survivors of modern slavery. In addition to this, we have taken calls from 25 professionals who had identified a survivor: providing advice on cases and signposting professionals to appropriate support services.



Our volunteers have been working hard to complete some volunteer-led projects at SafePlace. One project has seen the creation of easy-to-read recipe cards, the cards will enable service users to cook independently at SafePlace and improve their life skills. We are now in the process of translating the cards into the languages we commonly see at SafePlace. If you are able to translate or fund translations, please get in touch. Another volunteer project has increased the range of religious texts that we have at SafePlace, which is a common ask from our service users. We have many more volunteer-led projects in the works so please keep an eye out for details.

We have been enjoying sharing knowledge using training swaps. Recently we have received training sessions from the National Centre for Domestic Violence, Birmingham LGBT and Equip. We have enjoyed delivering modern slavery training sessions to some of the above organisations as well as colleagues in West Midlands Police. We would like to thank these organisations for their time and knowledge. We would like to put a call out for donations of small/medium men's clothes and non-perishable food items.

Thank you to our referral partners West Midlands Police, Warwickshire Police and GLAA for signposting survivors to us and facilitating vital support. Thank you to the organisations that we have worked with to ensure that survivors get the multi-agency support that they need, your collaboration has been fundamental to securing positive outcomes for our service users.

Hebe Lawson, SafePlace Manager

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A word from one of our amazing SafePlace volunteers!

Volunteering for WMASN has always been a unique experience and no less so in the context of the pandemic. Over the last few months, the volunteer team has grown, bringing with it a wealth of new skills. We've taken advantage of this by initiating a number of projects, with our service users in mind, which we hope to finalise before SafePlace returns to full capacity. These have involved sourcing exercise equipment, campaigning for donations of religious texts, creating a multi-national cookbook, and much more! It is so fantastic to be part of a team you can rely on and I hope this sentiment is felt by our service users too.

We also recently worked on a Co-Design survey for those of Vietnamese and Albanian descent as part of WMASN's initiative to continuously increase our collective cultural awareness. There is no end to the activities the staff are ready to get you involved in which brings an overwhelming sense of variety and independence to the role. For me personally, this has extended to graphic design, tech-training, and campaigning to name a few.

Of course, none of these activities quite beat feeling that you've made a difference to a service-user's day and I hope to get back to this soon. I'm so grateful that continuously the SU's trust us to share their stories and space. Whether it's demo'ing a washing machine or chatting through a language barrier about families and clothes and what makes a good tv show, volunteering for WMASN always reminds you that people are fundamentally just that - people. It is so easy to get caught up in harrowing statistics (or more recently worrying legislation), that those at the centre of it all can be forgotten. Volunteering for WMASN ultimately gives me the motivation to fight for a freer future, not forgetting that this journey must be taken one step at a time, with our service users at the heart.

Katie, Volunteer at the WMASN SafePlace.

If you or anyone you know might be interested in volunteering with us, either at SafePlace or in a support / admin capacity, please contact hebe.lawson@westmidlandsantislavery.org



BITC BOOST: Coaching to develop skills, wellbeing, and chances of success.

Business in the Community aims to connect trained business volunteers to offer tailored **support to jobseekers** with:

- Essential & digital skills (e.g. speaking, active listening, IT literacy, confidence, problem solving etc)
- Improved chances of a successful job outcome – increasing knowledge of the local job market & developing key employability skills.
- Enhance wellbeing & resilience – supporting clients to remain positive & focussed

Our business volunteers offer 1:1 coaching - developing skills, increasing confidence & supporting positive wellbeing.

For further information contact: Julie Keen, Employment Programme Manager, West Midlands
Julie.Keen@bitc.org.uk

To refer a client, please follow the link below:

www.bitc.org.uk/boost-client-registration

New Research on Refining a Public Health Approach to Modern Slavery

West Midlands Anti-Slavery Network cited as good practice and West Midlands Health and Wellbeing Team participated in the development process: <https://www.antislaverycommissioner.co.uk/news-insights/new-research-on-refining-a-public-health-approach-to-modern-slavery/>

New research [published today](#) examines the case for a public health approach to modern slavery and identifies the key components that are considered important in enabling the anti-slavery sector to address modern slavery through a public health lens.

The research, which includes a [report](#), an interactive [framework](#) and a [guide](#) for anti-slavery partnerships, has been developed by the University of Sheffield, the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner and Public Health England. Public health approaches have been applied to a range of socially complex and long-standing problems, for example, serious violence. A public health approach is a way of thinking and acting collectively to address a problem that can damage health and wellbeing including: understanding a problem at a population level; framing the problem as part of a complex and interdependent system; collating data and evidence of what works; being prevention focused; protecting health and well-being; encouraging multi-agency working and addressing inequalities, social justice and human rights.

A public health approach to modern slavery offers an opportunity for coordination of effort across the anti-slavery sector. It has emerged as a promising framework for prevention, for planning at a national and local level and as a means of bringing together existing frameworks with a humane focus. This research, funded by Research England, sought to build on [initial research](#) and emerging practice in order to further refine a public health framework to address modern slavery in the UK.

To inform the research, a series of online workshops were held with stakeholders from across the anti-slavery sector and beyond. Learning from these workshops helped to devise and design a refined public health framework to address modern slavery with multiple components including national factors, regional and local factors, service design factors and service delivery factors.

The research has the following outputs:

- The [full report](#) of findings;
- The development of a refined interactive [framework](#) for a public health approach to modern slavery;
- A [guide](#) for policy, strategy and local partnerships to support them in adopting a public health approach to modern slavery.

Read the report: [Refining a public health approach to modern slavery](#)

West Midlands Anti Slavery Network Meeting Dates for 2021:

For more information, please contact: donna.pryor@westmidlandsantislavery.org

- ❖ 15th July
- ❖ 16th September
- ❖ 18th November



Tea Break

Hi, Davina here, I am the Advice and Advocacy Coordinator for the West Midlands Anti Slavery Network SafePlace Project. I have identified the need to host a [Tea-Break](#) session and would like to open this offer up to other organisations to be able to include some more diversity in an anonymous manner, and to help us pilot our first session. The aim is for the first session to take place before September and the topic is yet to be confirmed.

If you are interested in getting your organisation involved or would like some more information, please feel free to contact me either via email:

davina.woollery@westmidlandsantislavery.org or 07708 185 364



USEFUL LINKS

Modern Slavery Helpline: 08000 121 700

Force Intelligence Bureau (FIB): fib@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

[National Referral Mechanism Guidance](#)

[Digital NRM Form](#)

[Modern Slavery Act Duty to Notify](#)

[Home Office: 2020 UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery](#)

[Human Trafficking Foundation Trafficking Survivor Care Standards](#)

[Recovery Needs Assessment](#)

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