

MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT



RESOURCE PACK 2025



Portsmouth Diocese



"Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked" Ps 82:4

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INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking disfigures dignity. Exploitation and subjugation limit freedom and turn people into objects to use and discard. And the system of trafficking profits from the injustice and wickedness that oblige millions of people to live in conditions of vulnerability”.

Pope Francis, World Day of Prayer & Reflection Against Human Trafficking 2023

The most recent global slavery estimates that more than 50 million people are trapped in modern slavery with 28 million in forced labour. One quarter of these are children. In the UK there are an estimated 122,000 victims, hidden, often in plain sight in a variety of industries including construction, health and beauty (often nail bars) agriculture, car washes, domestic service, sex industry and care services as well as in the supply chains of many of the goods we buy.

Modern slavery is an abhorrent abuse of human rights and includes forced labour, human trafficking, servitude and forced marriage. It is estimated that \$236 billion is generated in illegal profits from forced labour with each victim generating profits of \$10,000 per year.

“The money obtained by human traffickers from their dirty, underhanded business is blood money. I am not exaggerating: It’s blood money.”

Pope Francis, 2020.



Definitions.

Human Trafficking is internationally defined to include the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, through the use of threats, fraud, coercion or deception. It involves the abuse of an individual’s position of vulnerability for the purpose of exploitation for profit. It is important to note that trafficking does not require individuals to be transported across borders and can occur within one country.

Modern Slavery is a term mainly used in the UK and defined in the UK Modern Slavery Act 2015 to include the exploitation of a person via slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour. The Act also includes human trafficking as a form of modern-day slavery.

Exploitation can take many forms, with some individuals being exploited a number of times in multiple ways. Some forms of exploitation are:

- Sexual exploitation
- Forced labour
- Criminal exploitation
- Forced marriage
- Child slavery

For more information see the Caritas Social Action Network Do Justice HTMS [resource](#).

People are held in slavery through fear. Traffickers often use violence, blackmail, emotional manipulation, removal of ID documents, fraudulent employment agencies, education and job opportunities to trick and coerce their victims.

Anyone can become a victim of modern slavery, although evidence is growing that some groups are more vulnerable including ethnic minorities, those socially excluded, foreign nationals and migrant workers.

There are four main types of modern slavery and human trafficking exploitation in the UK:

Domestic servitude: Often takes place in private households, where offenders can have high levels of control over a victims' movement and finances. This can include confining them to the house and using physical and sexual violence against victims.

Exploitation in criminal activity is the form of modern slavery and human trafficking most reported to official channels. Victims of exploitation in criminal activity are often at risk of violence from both their exploiters and from rival criminal gangs.

Labour exploitation occurs when a person is made to work for little or no pay or has access to their wages controlled or limited by another person. Victims often have little understanding of their rights and may be threatened and fearful of reprisals.

Sexual exploitation takes place both within the commercial sexual services marketplace, and within organised crime groups. Victims endure long-term psychological distress and physical harm resulting from their exploitation.



MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT

A modern slavery statement sets out the steps organisations are taking to prevent modern slavery in both their businesses and supply chains. It is required by organisations who have a turnover of greater than £36 million through business activities.

While the Diocese does not meet this financial criteria, it has chosen to take a proactive approach in this Jubilee Year to see how it can minimise the risk of inadvertently supporting modern slavery through its actions.

Across the diocese, more than 500 people were referred into the National Referral Mechanism in 2024. This is the Home Office framework for identifying and supporting potential victims of human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced/compulsory labour in England and Wales

Indifference in the face of this challenge is not an option.

[Read the Modern Slavery Statement](#)



PARISH RESOURCES

The key to eradicating modern slavery in our communities is knowing what to look for and knowing how to act if concerned.

Training: The CSSA have developed a free training module via the Learning Management System (LMS) to raise awareness and understanding in relation to Modern slavery. If you do not already have a safeguarding training account, access to the LMS is via self-registration using this link <https://training.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/>. Please click SIGN UP, and enter your details accordingly. Please choose DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH under Diocese and PORTSMOUTH DIOCESE LEVEL 3 as the role. When inputting parish details please add both the location and the full name of your church. You do not need to add any detail under Group/Cohort/Community/Event.

"I thought the training was very good, especially the case study videos and the strong message that this is something for everyone to take action on."

Video: The Santa Marta Group, an alliance of police chiefs and bishops from around the world working together with civil society to eradicate human trafficking and modern day slavery have put together an [awareness raising video](#) that can be watched, ideally as part of a parish / pastoral area group.

Spot the Signs Poster: Display the spot the signs poster in your parish to know what to look for and how to report a concern.

[Download](#) a copy for your parish.

Appearance

- Show signs of physical or psychological abuse and untreated injuries
- Look underfed, unwashed, withdrawn and neglected
- Seem under the control or in fear of others
- Inappropriately dressed, either for the weather or for the job

Work

- Works long shifts
- Drinks energy drinks but not lunch
- Has few or no breaks
- Dropped off or picked up in crowded minibus
- Little or no safety equipment
- No payslip, and little or no pay
- Reluctant to talk, avoids eye contact

Asking for help

- Needs help now.
- Fear of police, doesn't know who to trust.
- Fear of employer.
- Afraid of deportation, risk of violence to family or themselves.
- Has no ID or control of ID documents.

Accommodation

- Lives in overcrowded, cramped and dirty accommodation.
- Lives and works at the same address.
- Does not know their address.
- Appears unfamiliar with the neighbourhood.



Supplier / Contractor Due Diligence: Follow the procurement policy for choosing suppliers and contractors, using resources e.g How to Compare the market. In addition consider the following:

- Minimise use of casual labour.
- Look for quality marks and trade associations eg Checkatrade. Double check the information on the association site matches what you have been given.
- Where possible look for ethical trading commitments including Fairtrade, Ethical Trading Initiative, B-Corp's.
- Do local searches for reviews, ask for the companies stance on pay - are they a living wage employer? Do they have an Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) strategy in place?
- Consider Churchmarketplace (CMP) to source suppliers. CMP requires companies to reflect on modern slavery within its supply chain and its own internal operations. Regardless of the size of the company or its turnover, successful bidders appointed to be Official Suppliers to Churchmarketplace must provide a Modern Slavery Statement.

Ethical trading Initiative base code: The ETI Base Code sets out a clear standard that all businesses should follow to ensure fair and safe working conditions.

"Every human being is a free person, destined to live for the good of others in equality and fraternity" **Pope Francis**



REPORTING A CONCERN

If someone is in immediate danger call 999

Report non-emergency suspicious activity to your local police on 101

Modern slavery helpline to report a concern 08000 121 700

Salvation Army helpline 0800 808 3733

Use the STOP APP (Stop the traffik)

The STOP APP can be downloaded by anyone. It is anonymous, confidential and secure and allows you to submit suspicious activity quickly by sending text based messages and uploading photo's and video's.

Do not approach a potential victim and ask questions as this may place them in more danger.

For exploitative working contact Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority. Visit www.gla.gov.uk, or phone 0115 959 7052 (Intelligence team)

Diocese Safeguarding team can be contacted at safeguarding@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

SURVIVOR STORY

Luka was born in a poor part of Eastern Europe. When he was a toddler, he was taken into care. By the time he left care at 18, his parents had died. For a while, he lived with his sister. She, though, was into crime and used Luka's identity card to commit fraud. He was forced to move out. With little or no money, he sofa-surfed or slept rough.

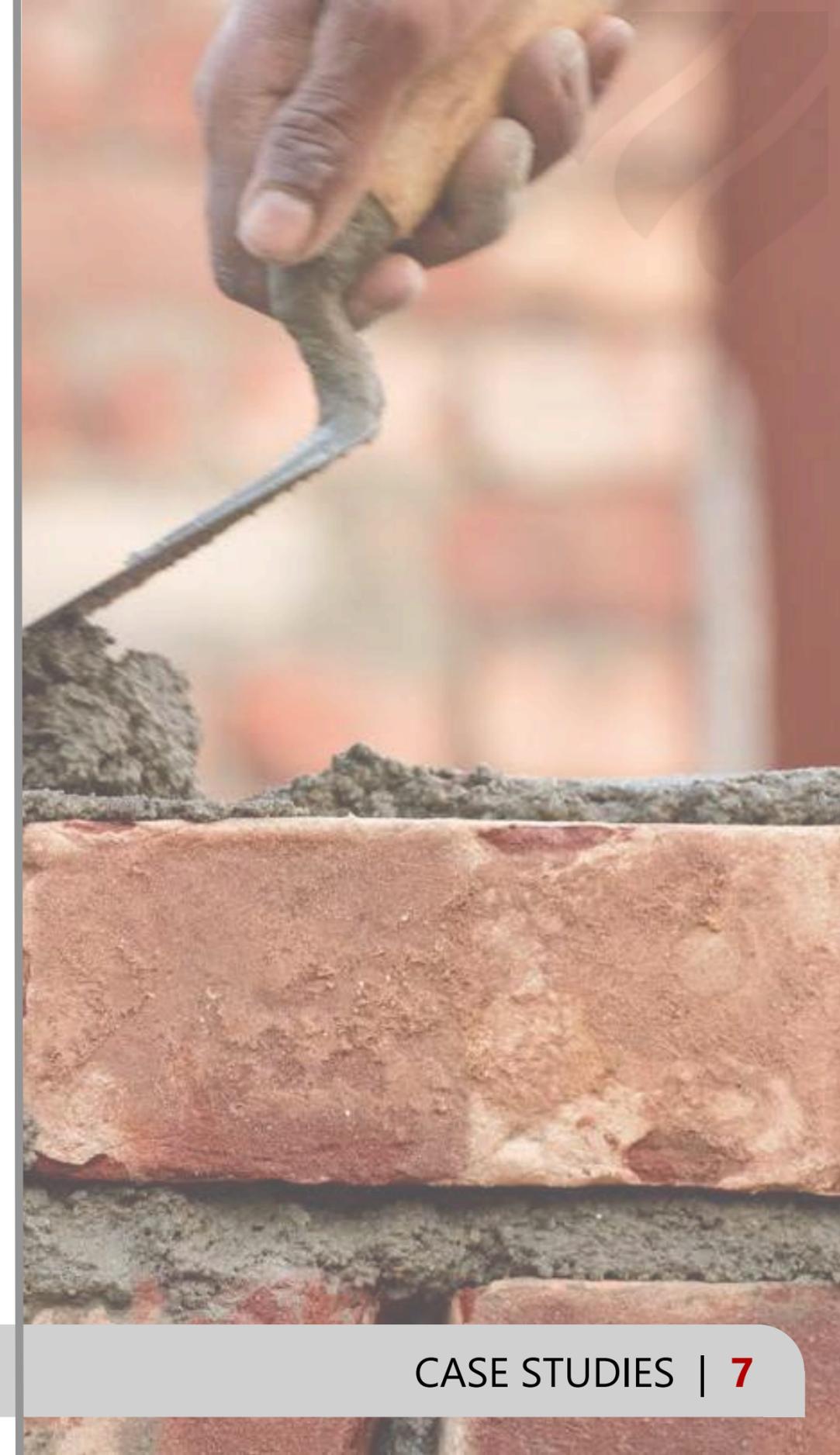
Through a friend, Luka contacted a guy called Martin, who lived in the UK. Eventually, Martin said he could find Luka a job. He offered to pay the fare for Luka to move to the UK, as well as providing food and accommodation. The opportunity sounded too good to be true and Luka jumped at the chance.

In 2016, Luka arrived in a town in the Midlands, where he moved in with Martin and his wife and children. Luka gave Martin his national identity card and passport for safekeeping. For the first month, Luka did not have to work, and he shared in family life. Soon afterwards, however, it became clear that things were, indeed, too good to be true. Martin had found Luka a job renovating older properties. Martin told him that he would have to pay half of his wages to cover the cost of his food, rent and debts. Luka thought that sounded reasonable. It was not.

Working long hours, six days a week, Luka received just £20 every Saturday. Luka was too frightened to confront Martin. With no money – and Martin holding on to his passport – Luka was compelled to keep working. Unable to speak English and with nowhere to go, Luka felt helpless. He did not know where to turn. This carried on for five years until, one day, Luka contacted a friend back home.

Recognising Luka's plight, the friend shared Luka's story with a local charity. Immediately, staff recognised that Luka was being exploited and, having worked with Medaille Trust in the past, contacted one of their safe houses. Medaille staff worked quickly to locate and rescue Luka.

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FROM THE NEWS

Listen to Julia's story through the Guardian podcast 'Trafficked'. [Listen here.](#)

University lecturer and her husband arrested after police find 'slave' living in their garden shed. [Read more.](#)

Two men charged with keeping '10 Romanian slaves at a car wash in Southampton for five months' [Read more.](#)

A Romanian man has been sentenced to eight years in prison after pleading guilty to human trafficking, forced labour and exploitation offences [Read more.](#)

A drug dealer from Andover has been jailed after admitting an offence under modern slavery laws – the first conviction of its kind in Hampshire. [Read more.](#)

Six people who exploited Vietnamese workers who had been smuggled into the UK for forced labour on cannabis farms have been convicted. [Read more.](#)

Landlord ignored plight of victims forced to wash in canal. [Read more.](#)

Charity and police break up UK's largest modern slavery ring. [Read more.](#)



WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

- **Talk** - Modern slavery is often described as hidden, so we need to talk about it, share information, get it into the open. This helps both for recognising potential victims as well as preventing people becoming victims. Traffickers approach people in a variety of ways, often exploiting their vulnerabilities. The more people are aware, the more chance they have of recognising a dangerous situation. Many of the charities mentioned in the pack will give talks.
- **Learn** – Knowing how to spot the signs of Modern Slavery. If something that doesn't look or feel quite right – it probably isn't. We have created a 'spot the signs' poster to be put up in parishes. It also has the information of what to do if you have a concern.
- **Act** - Modern slavery "is fuelled by wars, conflicts, famine and the consequences of climate change". (Pope Francis). Anything we do that helps eliminate these, supports the elimination of modern slavery.
- **Pray** – The feast day of St Josephine Bakhita, the patron saint of victims of human trafficking is on February 8th You can pray this Novena leading up to her feast day, starting 30th January, or any time of year. There are other prayer resources here.
- **Study** -Take the opportunity to learn more about slavery through the teachings of St Paul's Letter to the Galatians in the study True Freedom. Put together by the Clewer Initiative and the World Council of Churches, it was initially released for Lent 24 but can be done at any time of year.
- **Advocate** – 2025 marks the 10-year anniversary of the Modern Slavery Act in the UK and many groups are asking for it to be updated and strengthened. The Santa Marta group, the agency set up by Pope Francis to combat modern slavery works in this political space. They run interactive sessions in parishes to highlight what work needs to be done, please contact us at caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk if your parish is interested. We are also hoping to introduce a modern slavery ambassador programme so get in touch if you are interested to know more.



CONCLUSION

Addressing modern slavery and human trafficking is an ongoing effort and this Modern Slavery Statement is a step on the journey.

We regularly review and evaluate policies, procedures and practices to identify areas of improvement. We do this by engaging with stakeholders, participating in industry forums and staying updated with legislative changes.

We also work in collaboration with charities and agencies such as Medaille Trust, Stella Maris and the Caritas Social Action Network to enhance our understanding and strengthen our efforts to combat modern slavery and human trafficking and help develop best practice in a constantly changing world.

Pope Francis urged us to walk in the footsteps of St Bakhita who was sold as a child into slavery and was a victim of traffickers until she landed in Italy, where she later became a Cannyonian religious sister. *"Saint Bakhita encourages us to open our eyes and ears to see those who go unseen and to hear those who have no voice, to acknowledge the dignity of each person, and to fight trafficking and all forms of exploitation"*.

For more information on modern slavery and the information and resources in this pack, contact Caritas Diocese of Portsmouth at caritas@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk.

St Josephine Bakhita, pray for us.

