

PLASP Meeting; January 23 2020

Homelessness Event

We have a date of 11 March at Blackburn library and we aim to run two sessions for front line staff – one in the morning and one in the afternoon – comprising presentations and scenarios for delegates to consider what action they would take. Delegates will get a copy of [The Passage Modern Day Slavery Handbook](#) which covers the signs to look out for and what to do.

Hoteliers Event

Traffickers have turned to hotels for the purpose of sexual exploitation, booking rooms in sometimes high profile hotels for short periods. Reception desk staff and night porters need to be on the alert and not turn a blind eye.

The Shiva Foundation, a corporate body of Shiva Hotels, convened hoteliers including Hilton, WGC and Bespoke Hotels to form the Stop Slavery Hotel Industry Network in 2016. In 2018 the Network, members of which are involved with 6,000 properties and almost a quarter of a million staff members across 100 countries, called on the wider industry to do more to tackle modern slavery in a report [Modern Slavery and the Hotel Industry: Best Practice Guidance for Franchising](#)

We are planning a PCC funded event at the De Vere Hotel in Blackpool.

National Updates

The [Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioners Strategic Plan](#) has four priorities: Improving victim care and support; Supporting law enforcement and prosecutions; Focusing on prevention; Getting value from research and innovation. The back of the report has numerous references and reports under these four headings.

Nationally there has been reduction in prosecutions though Lancashire continues to do well with operations across the county.

Local authorities have responsibility for child victims and are supported in some areas by Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (ICTG) who act in the child's best interest and supports them with each step of recovery. The ICTG support in England and Wales has been independently evaluated and the results were encouraging. It is vital that it is now implemented across the country. Lancashire does not currently have ICTGs.

Brexit poses a threat to anti-trafficking operations. There are 24 joint investigation teams on immigration and the future of these collaborations is uncertain. Not referred to in the meeting but relevant, the [Joint civil society report on trafficking and modern slavery in the UK to the UN Human Rights Committee 2020](#) says that: "With many of the UK's anti-slavery efforts stemming from EU legislation, cutting ties with the EU presents risks and challenges. The first of these is a lack of access to EU wide mechanisms such as Europol or Eurojust, preventing relevant authorities working effectively

with other countries to investigate international trafficking cases. The second is that many people will also be made more vulnerable by potential changes in their immigration status, potentially leading to an increase in exploitation. Proposed tied or time limited visas carry a particular risk of exploitation. The third challenge is in the safeguarding of victims – with many protections currently stemming from the EU law, Brexit greatly risks diluting them.

The role of local authorities in supporting NRM victims has come under scrutiny with court case issues around housing. Local authorities have a responsibility with pressure on them to prioritise the vulnerable including homeless and trafficked but the cost is higher.

There is concern about NRM First Responders and the quality of decisions made. Some of the paperwork is virtually non-existent.

Marek

See his account in the 21 November PLASP meeting notes. Marek is keen to present to groups of people and he will also present his story in a video