

Caritas Diocese of Salford Update of Activities from July and ongoing

July 12, 2.00 pm: Porticus consultation on understanding the issues around modern slavery

The consultation was with Purpose who are working with Porticus. Although their focus was Filipino Diaspora domestic workers they wanted to know generally what we had learned from campaigning/attitude changing. Seven years experience on anti-trafficking has taught us there has to be a way other than everything we have tried so far and that that way lies in the realm of large rather than small scale influence. In preparation for this consultation we discovered that Porticus have a human trafficking strand <https://www.porticus.com/en/our-priorities/migration-and-human-trafficking/> and funding which could apply to the kind of initiatives few envisage.

July 14, 2.00 pm: Anti-Slavery Forum.

The Partnership Declaration (see under the [One Church Approach webpage](#)) has yet to be finalised with outstanding amendments to be made. There were two items on the agenda: a MedailleTrusstidea to have volunteers in the field trained as First Responders; and discussion on the New Plan for Immigration. (See Note 1)

July 14 4, 00 pm: Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner Annual Report.

The IASC report for 2020/21 was laid before Parliament earlier that day and Sarah Thornton gave a summary of next year's priorities and progress during the current period. There was then input from three people on the Nationality and Borders Bill followed by discussion on how people might respond to concerns about victims of modern slavery that would arise from parts of the Bill. (See Note 2)

July 20, 6.00 pm: Afruca, Safeguarding Children from County Lines in School Holidays.

This has high relevance to our discussions with Operation Challenger. To understand the scale of County Lines see this link <https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/over-1-000-people-arrested-and-almost-300-weapons-seized-as-part-of-county-lines-crackdown>

Also on County Lines we have recently become aware of an E Learning Programme on Child Victims of Modern Day Slavery for First Responders and Safeguarding Partners which is excellent. <https://www.policingslavery.co.uk/transforming-our-response/training-delivery/e-learning-child-victims-of-modern-slavery/> Four of the six modules could apply to other organizations and would be easily adapted for school staff if we were able to get permission. It's the most accessible material we've seen and doesn't take long to go through the modules.

(See Note 3 for details of the Zoom.)

July 22, 10.00 am: Pan Lancashire Anti-Slavery Partnership Meeting

Caritas Salford is a founder member of PLASP which now has around 100 representatives, some of whom have given us strong support – British Red Cross, Hope for Justice, the Friendship Foundation, Clewer, probably others and of course Lancashire Police. Lancashire Police make good use of the Freedom Bus (funded by Caritas) and Journey to Freedom (part funded by Caritas)

These meetings are very useful in updating on police exercises and prosecutions in Lancashire plus developments that strengthen the partnership. Most significant for us in information we can use in talks, or for any victim centred work we may become involved in.

(See Note 4 for some points from the zoom)

July 24: Burnley Freedom Day

The freedom days are a good opportunity to promote Caritas, strengthen partnerships and build new ones. (See Note 5)

August 28: Cheshire Freedom Day

It was interesting to hear the experiences of Cheshire Police – very similar profile of modern slavery to Lancashire and overloaded despite a strong dedicated team. It was good to learn something from the Police Community Support Officers and how they operate as an effective visible presence at less cost than police officers if with limited powers. It was a good chance to catch up on the latest from Lancashire Police.

We met with Ceridwen Copping from Hope at Home who presented at last PLASP. Hope at Home provide a hosting service for victims and of interest to us as part of the PLASP Victim Support Group.

Linked to this was a woman who showed interest in our bus. She related how she had come across a woman selling the Big Issue who was actually being forced to sell for someone else. She reported to the Police and actually accommodated the victim for 6 months before being taken into the NRM at which point she lost contact. We asked her to be in touch because it is a useful story and perhaps a useful contact.

Ongoing: Homeless trafficked man

C came to our attentions via the Safeguarding Officer at the local Anglican Church. We played a key role in an exercise that involved many people and eventually resulted in recognition of him as a potential victim. He was taken to a safe house only to abscond the following day. There were a lot of lessons from this exercise from which we might learn. There are reports of him being sighted again.

Ongoing: Input to the Caritas Social Action Network response to the Nationality and Borders Bill

This is important in itself but particularly for Section 4 of the Bill (Modern Day Slavery) which is the focus for action following the Anti-Slavery Forum and Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner's 2020/2021 Annual Report zooms. We have gone through Hansard for the second reading of the Bill and summarised the main arguments against parts of the bill as raised by MPs under the headings of Asylum and Detention, Modern Slavery, and Faith and Humanity. It is clear that there is a great deal wrong with this Bill as exemplified by: the reaction of France to plans to remove "illegal immigrants" back to France in breach of International Law; and the APPG on Immigration and Detention enquiry into the Napier Barracks.

Note 1: July 14, 2020, Anti-Slavery Forum

The Anti-Slavery Forum is the vehicle for partnership following the In Plain Sight Conference in October 2019. Due to Covid, developments from that conference are still in an early stage.

We have a lot invested in this Forum and the partnership which we hope will develop from it. The In Plain Sight Conference arose from early discussions between Caritas and SMG. We led the discussions and designed and led the programme. With the involvement of Arise at a later stage the potential for joint working was ratcheted up and Luke de Pulford saw the conference as the opportunity for the One Church Approach he had tried and failed to achieve before. If dioceses and Salford in particular, sign up to the Partnership Declaration it should greatly enhance our influence in the Diocese.

The Forum was convened by Sr Lynda Dearlove (Women at the Well) and Kevin Hyland (former Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner).

Cardinal Nichols did the welcome: "...working together in solidarity, but we don't lose our individuality; good chairmanship and guidance; recognizing the distinctiveness each brings to the partnership; a really good pathway we are beginning to open up"

I had hoped that the Partnership Declaration would be agreed at this meeting but it is still being worked on. Arise are waiting on some final feedback on the declaration by some participants of the Forum. As soon as this happens, Arise will incorporate these changes and share the declaration with everyone.

The final name of the Forum is still to be decided. I have said that "partnership" needs to be included in the name and Arise are happy to consider that and await our suggestions. As I see it there should be a formal partnership as with PLASP (which has subgroups and small working parties) and regular meetings which could be termed "forum". My fear is that it could become little more than a talking shop with any partnerships developing as a by-product. The two agenda items for July 14 suggested my fears had some substance even though they were useful in themselves:

UK Government New Immigration Plan, proposed by Catherine Ramos

Prior to the meeting we were asked about unintended consequences, particularly as modern slavery and human trafficking were not raised as substantive issues in the plan.

The New Immigration Plan, published in March 2021, set out the government's intentions to build a "fair but firm" asylum and illegal immigration system. We propose that CASF consider whether the concerns below represent the opinion of the group.

- *Routes to safety - people who have entered the UK via a "safe third country" will have limited access to entitlements, which may render them vulnerable to exploitation. The plan presumes that people can be returned to EU, or other developed countries, despite the fact that there is no returns agreement currently in place with any designated safe country. **Recommendation:** the Plan should*

Note 2: July 14, 2021, Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner Annual Report Zoom Meeting

The report was laid before Parliament earlier that day.

Agenda

16.00 - Chair: The Rt Revd Dr Alastair Redfern, Chair of the Commissioner's Advisory Panel and Chair of The Clewer Initiative will open the event.

16.05 - Dame Sara Thornton, Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, will speak for 10 minutes to give an overview of the Annual Report 2020-2021 - outlining her work so far to achieve her objectives as outlined in the Strategic Plan 2019-2021, and her current priorities in the areas of: improving victim care and support; supporting law enforcement and prosecutions; focusing on prevention; and getting value from research and innovation.

16.15 - The chair will invite the two panelists to present:

Panelist 1: The Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP, Co-Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery, will speak for 5 minutes.

Panelist 2: The Lord Coaker, Rights Lab Principle Research Fellow at the University of Nottingham, will speak for 5 minutes.

16.25 - Chair to pose questions to the speakers for the remaining time, taken from the Q&A function.

17.00 - Chair to close proceedings and thank all for joining.

Of particular interest to us at the meeting was the presence of Alastair Redfern (Chair of the IASC Advisory Panel and Chair of Clewer) and one of our main Clewer contacts; Sara Thornton (IASC); and Karen Bradley MP (Co-Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking) who is "minded" to take part in a Caritas Salford webinar on modern slavery.

At first we feared that Sarah Thornton's appointment would change the emphasis of the role from Kevin Hyland's focus on victim support to prosecuting perpetrators. In fact Sarah Thornton has turned out to be very victim orientated and comes across as a warm, approachable individual who is also very focused and articulate.

The best general summary of Sarah's thinking is taken from her statement (for the press?) about the report:

"The Modern Slavery Act (2015) sets out my role to encourage good practice across the UK and my strategic plan set out how I planned to do that. This report is structured around the four priorities in the strategic plan and details my activities over eleven months from my appointment in May 2019.

"More victims of modern slavery are being identified and protected but there are still too many weaknesses in the systems. In particular, we need to do more to ensure that those who have suffered from the most egregious criminal acts are supported to become survivors leading lives of sustainable independence. Ever-longer delays in decision-making within the National Referral Mechanism must

Note 3: July 20, 6.00 pm, Afruca, Safeguarding Children from County Lines in School Holidays

The [video of the zoom](#) is well worth watching for schools workers and in the context of our link with GMP Challenger. Afruca's focus is BAME but apart from that being of relevance in itself, much of what was said has much wider application.

Speakers were: Claire McGuire DCI Operation Challenger; Ruth Ogunji – Blossom Foundation; Lisa Harvey Nebil- Head of Youth Strategy and Engagement; Manchester City Council; and Janete Seide County Lines, Afruca Family Support Services in conjunction with Manchester City Council. Each gave 5 minute on the issues from their perspective, then 5 minutes on solutions followed by questions.

Our current link with Afruca is via Fabiola Bayavuge and we would do well to strengthen it, particular given these new potential County Lines contacts. Claire McGuire is new to Challenger but I am sure we will come across her via our current Challenger contacts.

It was a good hour which emphasised both the growing seriousness of the problem and the things that these and other organisations were doing to combat it, with particular reference to the school holidays. Most of it applied generally and not just to the population of Afruca's main focus.

Some things that struck me in particular:

- The role of organisations and partnerships in preventing young people getting into County Lines
- In Africa the whole village raises the child (easy to dismiss as irrelevant but it gels with our Christian ideal of community)
- Absent parents and the particular problems faced by single parents
- Talk in churches
- In Manchester 90 providers offered 6,800 places for holiday activities. Providers need training to upskill and their needs to be specialists involved who can make contact with youth. (I saw the easy contact that Helen from Essere Therapies made with a bunch of kids who gathered round our Freedom Bus at Burnley and boarded it in a flash without permission.)
- Providing activities isn't just a holiday issue
- Parents of children at risk had a particular problem during Covid and need to be made more aware of holiday activities. (This was in an issue with our Clitheroe asylum seeking children. There were activities but heavily booked and most involved travel.)
- With children off the streets the County Lines traffickers changed focus to social media. An example given was an "innocent" child on Snapchat was attracted by money for work. A car was at the door and took them away within minutes.
- Afruca offer a parent centred service for BAME
- Afruca offer support for families wanting to move to another area. (This resonated with the two single mothers we met at Burnley who desperately wanted to get their children away from what was happening on their streets.)
- The need for early help in equipping parents to understand. An interesting new strand to this idea was for intergenerational gap parents who are out of touch with the modern world their children live in. Communication is more problematic.

Note 4: July 22, 2020 PLASP Meeting

Sion referred to the recent Operation Laval which I don't think has been reported in the press. Its importance is the details of her experience that a woman rescued from a brothel has supplied which will help the prosecution greatly. The victim will testify in a way that makes it quite plain how serious the exploitation was. Sion has asked that we don't share the graphic details and he will share a sanitised version that we can use.

PLASP now has access to a tattooist who will work on the tattoos that perpetrators have branded their victims with. Removal is difficult but they can be turned into something that disguises what is already there.

Sheralyn Melton of Lancashire Police and [Engage](#) are organising a County Lines awareness event towards the end of September which will include presentations by three individuals who have been directly involved - an ex OCG member, a recovered addict and a parent. Caritas will have a stall.

The Medaille Trust – a PLASP partner – has started an Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) pilot and have 6 trained staff in the North West. Essentially their role is to interview victims on video in the way that Police do but as a less threatening alternative. Lancashire is an early leader in the pilot. The biggest problem may be persuading local police that the Medaille can do a better job than they can.

Emmaus – a charity with locations in Preston and Burnley has recruited two ex homeless Outreach Workers who will go out evening till early morning seeking street homeless people and offering support where appropriate. Homeless people are particularly vulnerable to trafficking and some have already been trafficked – see Emmaus involvement with C (Note 6)

We had a presentation from [Hope at Home](#) who provides accommodation for victims of trafficking via a register of hosts and a register of potential referral agencies. Hope at Home contacted Caritas Anti-Trafficking back in 2018 when they were a new charity. Sion and I had a telephone meeting at the time but it has taken till now to invite them to a PLASP meeting. They have grown substantially and have more hosts than victims.

Note 5: July 24, Pan Lancashire Anti-Slavery Partnership Roadshow/Freedom Day at Burnley



Our Anti-Trafficking stall in front of the Freedom Bus at Burnley

These events are enormously helpful not only in meeting the public, and learning from them, but also in maintaining and developing links.

County Lines

I met Sheralyn Melton, a police officer with the Engage Team (Child Sexual Exploitation and vulnerable children generally). Sheralyn is our contact for a County Lines awareness day in Lancashire which will feature speakers from a range of perspectives: ex offender, recovered addict, and parent. This event may help formulate a schools response. I also wanted to introduce Helen Lewin, a counsellor from Essere Therapies, who are interested in adding County Lines work to their work in schools. Helen's husband is a Police Officer with Lancashire Police. The discussion was useful in establishing interest and possible future involvement.

Two single parents with young children spoke to us about the difficulties of drugs and gangs in their location and their current inability to move of the area. One knew of a house that had been cuckooed and gave details of the address to Sheralyn

Boohoo Factory

Two Bulgarian young people – a man and his girlfriend – spoke at length about their experience in the Burnley Boohoo factory. Although they had received the minimum wage and had no particular