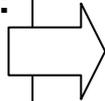


PROGRESS REPORT 7 MAY 2013

Campaign to ban "sex for sale" adverts:

TOTAL SIGNATURES TO DATE:

25,842



TARGET:

100,000 signatures



Thank you for continuing to collect signatures for us – since our last Report in April we have received a total 1,647 signatures from areas as diverse as Bangor, Portaferry and Newtownards in Northern Ireland, from Falkirk, Paisley and Dundee areas in Scotland South and North, from Chester and Northwich in Cheshire, North Wales and Wirral, Burnley and Warrington in Lancs, Plymouth, Bournemouth/Poole Gloucester in the South and Southwest, Tenby in South Wales, Peterborough in Northants, Oxford, Cambridge and a numerous London Boroughs. Thank you for your efforts great or small – every signature counts

Many Soroptimist clubs are sending us in additional signatures beyond their own members. Apart from personal friends and colleagues, members have contacts with local WI, Rotary, Lions, Baptist, Catholic, Methodist and CoFE Churches and are asking them to sign –many people are not aware of the extent of sex trafficking in the UK, you can help to raise awareness by collecting signatures. – people are very keen to sign once they know why.

Download a petition form [here](#)

Help! Of the total number of signatures to date, only 1,241 are from our On-line petition. If you have friends and colleagues with whom you are in touch via Facebook, Twitter, or other social media sites, please ask them to sign the on-line petition, to follow us, and to re-Tweet – we are very keen to improve our number of signatures on this site. Copy and paste the link to the Go-Petition site: **"Ban 'Sex for Sale' Advertising"** **Only you can help us do this!**



CUT IT OUT CAMPAIGN

Many thanks to those clubs who joined us in the "Cut it Out" campaign in March. We have had lamentably few replies back from Editors who were sent cut out sex ads from their papers and a covering letter in time for International Women's Day. However, some did reply and we are glad to show their comments:

SI Tunbridge Wells & District had a response from Archant London, the parent company of the Bexley Times. The majority of their adverts were text only, and were escort, massage and sex chat ads. The Group Editor writes *".. we have a stringent policy for personal or adult services, drawn up with guidance from the Newspaper Society, which is robustly applied by our staff. As part of that policy, staff must obtain the full names of business owners, together with full address and landline telephone contact details and, where appropriate or possible, obtain a signed declaration that the customer is operating a lawful business. If the council or the police make us aware of any customers operating an illegal business, Archant will cease publishing their advertisements. We have been in regular discussion with the various agencies over our publication of the advertisements and will continue to do so in order that we comply with any legal requirements"*.

As escort agencies and massage services are known outlets for prostitution, and therefore maybe illegal activity, is there room for more discussion with them, or perhaps with the police commissioner? (PTO)

The Director of Risk & Compliance for Trader Media Group acknowledged the letter they received from SI Poole and said they are reviewing this matter. They will respond with an outcome as soon as possible watch this space!

The Chairman & Chief Executive of Newsquest Media Group wrote:

Thank you for copying me into your letter to the Editor of Free Ad Mart on behalf of Soroptimist International. I share your views on the type of advertising to which you refer in your letter and in fact, our company policy is not to carry it in any of our publications. This has been the case for many years now. Just for information, Newsquest has no connection with FreeAd Mart having disposed of its shares in the publication in 2009.

(Newsquest were the first media group to ban all such advertising following the then Home Secretary Jackie Smith's request to do so. However, Free AdMart show Newsquest as their publishers in their paper dated August 2012 so we are pursuing this point with them..)

! If you sent off the ads in response to our Call to Action, but have had no reply, we would still like to hear from you to this effect.

DID YOU KNOW? About The interdepartmental ministerial group on human trafficking

The Ministerial Group, led by the Minister of State at the Home Office responsible for human trafficking, comprises **16-17 ministers** each with departmental responsibility for various aspects of modern day slavery. It includes ministers from Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The group purports to fulfil Article 27 of the EU Directive 2011/36/EU which requires **the establishment of a “national rapporteur or equivalent mechanism”**.

In its current state, it is believed the Ministerial Group falls short of the requirement of Article 27 by failing to assess trends in human trafficking effectively, collect relevant statistics, and advise on policy direction. Furthermore, it is not possible, in spite of best intentions, for government ministers meeting a few hours twice a year, and each with many other responsibilities, to fulfil the objectives of the government's Human Trafficking Strategy (2011). **Progress inevitably has halted.**

The Ministerial Group has met only 5 times in over 2 years. On each occasion, less than 50% of Ministers attended.

17 February 2011: 7 Ministers out of 15 attended
11 October 2011: 6 Ministers out of 17 attended
17 April 2012: 7 Ministers out of 15 attended
17 September 2012: 7 Ministers out of 15 attended
11 March 2013: 7 Ministers out of 16 attended

Despite evidence to the contrary, the Home Secretary insists that this group is ‘very effective’.

Hansard, 25 Mar 2013 : Column 1269

Fiona Bruce: I thank the Home Secretary for that reply. She has stated that fighting human trafficking is a Government priority, but with the number of victims found increasing month on month, what consideration has been given to a new initiative such as an independent commissioner?

Mrs May: I thank my hon. Friend for raising that issue, which has also been raised by others. The Government are not convinced of the need to introduce an independent commissioner and **we have, we believe, a very effective inter-departmental ministerial group**, chaired by my hon. Friend the Minister for Immigration. Crucially, that group includes not just representatives from Departments across Whitehall, but also from the devolved Administrations, **and we believe that is working well**. It is necessary, however, to consider continually our effectiveness in this area, and we will keep the work of the inter-departmental ministerial group under review to ensure that it is carrying out the effective work that we want it to do.

Our thanks to the [Human Trafficking Foundation](#) for researching and publishing this information. More can be found on their website, [Latest News – Modern Day Slavery Exhibition](#)