



PURPLE TEARDROP CAMPAIGN

stop the trafficking ~ stop the tears

Winter newsletter 2016/2017

Welcome to our Winter newsletter. This issue covers some of the activities that we are undertaking to help in the recovery and rehabilitation of people rescued from slavery, positive news from Scotland and the USA, and more trafficking stories.

Some of our partnership projects

We work with a number of projects that help survivors of trafficking and in this issue we are focussing on three of them. [City Hearts](#) and the [Snowdrop Project](#) are two projects in England doing wonderful work. In both cases they do not have sufficient funds to do what is needed and this is where we support them. We also support work with survivors in their own countries through our bra collection and shipment project.

City Hearts

Based in the North of England, City Hearts have set up a holistic program, giving individual care for each survivor, helping them begin to overcome their trauma and equipping them with the practical tools to live an independent life. Their ethos is to support them with respect and love as they are rebuilding their lives, and give them a voice in unclear situations which can often be the difference between security and helplessness, justice and injustice.

Their Outreach workers travel throughout North West England, regularly meeting individuals to assess their emotional, physical and practical needs and help them move forward towards a new life of freedom. They identify local services, from the NHS to private counsellors and then use this extensive network of contacts to quickly and effectively connect individuals to the necessary support.

Their Drop-In service is a vital part of their programme, providing a continuous support service that can be accessed by current and previous survivors. Committed volunteers and staff members offer a range of ways to learn skills and hobbies.

Snowdrop Project

The Snowdrop Project is based in Sheffield. It focuses on providing support to survivors of trafficking once they are ready to move on into their own accommodation. The survivors, of course, have nothing of their own, usually just the clothes that they were wearing when they were rescued. The Snowdrop project helps to turn that new accommodation into a home by painting, decorating and sourcing furniture.

Trained volunteers provide opportunities to build friendships in the community and to access new skills and hobbies through various social events.

Pre-loved bras empowering women

In the last newsletter, we reported on the number of used bras that we had received since we launched our project to help survivors of sex trafficking in El Salvador, Mozambique and Kenya.

At that point we had received enough bras to set up 26 survivors in their own businesses, selling them locally.

I am delighted to be able to tell you that thanks to all our wonderful supporters and your collections of used bras, we have now received enough to set up another 34 survivors in their own bra selling business, a total of 60 to date!

This is keeping them safe from being trafficked again by taking them out of poverty and making them financially independent. It is also doing wonders for their self confidence and self esteem. One survivor who has been running her own bra selling business now feels so empowered that she has passed the business on to another survivor and is now attending university. How wonderful is that!

Everyone has really taken this project to their hearts and we are so very grateful. On behalf of the survivors, thank you very, very much.

**Please keep sending clean, gently used bras to
The Purple Teardrop Campaign, c/o Poole CVS,
Beech House, 28 Wimborne Road, Poole BH15 2BU**



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Taxi drivers “eyes and ears” for sex trafficking

The police have told the Purple Teardrop Campaign how much they value the information that taxi drivers can provide to help them in the fight against trafficking. They are out in the community day and night and aware of what is happening in their area.

A recent case in the USA bears this out. An Uber driver took two women and a teenage girl to a Holiday Inn Express. During the journey, he overheard the two women giving sex tips to the teen. The girl was dressed inappropriately for her age. He grew suspicious and after dropping them off, he rang the police who went to the hotel and rescued the girl who it turned out was a runaway.

The driver said “I looked in her eyes. She had this face of innocence and like, insecure.”

The two older women were arrested on charges of pimping and pandering and the man she had been taken to have sex with was charged with having sex with a minor.

The police praised the Uber driver's response: “He could have said nothing, went on his way, collected the fare. Then that 16 year old victim could have been victimized again by who knows how many different people over the next couple of days, weeks, months”.

How important it is to make taxi drivers aware of the signs of sex trafficking and to encourage them to report it to the police.

London cab drivers have been enlisted in this, teaming up with police and anti-slavery groups to help identify victims and report any suspicious activity.

As part of the campaign, police officers are distributing air fresheners to taxi drivers with information on the signs of human trafficking.

A representative of cab company Goldline comments on the initiative: “We have seen the real difference it can make when our drivers are informed about what to look out for and where to report something suspicious they see.”

The Metropolitan Police's modern slavery unit stresses the importance of reporting any suspicions of trafficking: “Any piece of information, however big or small it is, could be relevant and form a missing piece of the picture that could help us rescue someone at risk, bring perpetrators to justice.”

Drivers can report their suspicions anonymously through the Modern Slavery helpline or via a Smartphone app.

Modern Slavery Helpline 0800 0121 700

The Modern Slavery Helpline provides a way for the public, victims, businesses and statutory agencies to report potential trafficking and have access to information and support on a 24/7 basis.

Members of the public and those delivering services on the front line can report any modern slavery suspicions or concerns about individual, premises or location.

Potential victims will have the chance to speak to fully trained call handlers who can help them access relevant services, including Government-funded support.

Businesses can ring in for information, advice and also to report any concerns they have about potential instances in their organization.

Statutory agencies can call to gain support in dealing with potential victims and to receive guidance in accessing all the information and tools available through the associated Resource Centre.

So please put the hotline number in your phone. **0800 0121 700**. You never know when you might spot a sign of potential trafficking. You can also report it online at

www.modernslaveryhelpline.org/report

If you feel it is an emergency, ring 999.



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Closure of Backpage 'adult' adverts in the USA

Backpage is described as the world's second largest classified advertising website. It has recently shut down the 'adult' section of its website in the USA, following the publication of a scathing Senate report that found that Backpage.com had "knowingly concealed evidence of criminality" by editing advertisements featuring words associated with child sex abuse.

There were certain words banned by Backpage including "Lolita, rape, young, fresh, schoolgirl". Adverts containing any of these words were not accepted for publication. However it had been discovered that the people whose adverts had been rejected had been given the opportunity to resubmit them without these words.

Whilst it was recognised that the website had passed information on some of the proposed adverts to the authorities, the implication was that very many more were still in this way being allowed through. Indeed Backpage.com was involved in 73% of all child trafficking reports passed from the public over to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Scotland's first human trafficking strategy launched

As part of the country's first human trafficking strategy, the Scottish government is launching guidelines to help increase awareness.

Scots will be urged to look for signs that people have been trafficked and ask whether what they are buying has been made by someone forced into that work. Consumers are asked to consider whether people working in their local nail bar, car wash or shop might have been trafficked into the country.

The move comes as figures show that trafficking has increased in Scotland and that many victims are forced into illegal activities with threats and violence, including being forced to work in the sex industry and in cannabis farms.

A major police crackdown targeted hundreds of premises across Scotland. Around 500 police officers from every division in the country took part in the first nationwide day of action of its kind, visiting more than 200 premises, including car washes, farms, beaches and nail bars. Sadly more than half the potential victims of human trafficking found were children under 18.

The strategy, which is going out to public consultation, states "We will inform the public, encouraging them to question and reject the exploitation of other human beings and to think about how what they buy and what they do could contribute to this crime."

20 years jail for traffickers in Devon

Members of a gang who trafficked Czechs into Plymouth and treated them as slaves have been sentenced to a total of more than 20 years in prison. In this instance there was no sexual exploitation, but we are including this story as it paints such a picture of how these victims had to live.

The traffickers had targeted vulnerable and desperate people, promising them a better life but treated them as servants and housed them in poor conditions while pocketing most of the money they brought in from work in factories and car washes.

Victims were fed Pot Noodles or leftovers, their living conditions included sleeping in a garage and even a cupboard. One victim was forced to shoplift, pushing trolleys of goods from supermarkets. As part of their humiliation, some were ordered to pay a pound to use the toilet or had to use the garden.

The victims were never locked up, but most felt unable to break free without money, contacts or the ability to speak English. Violence including use of a baseball bat was used and threats were made to them and their families in the Czech Republic. /Cont



PURPLE TEARDROP CAMPAIGN

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20 years jail for traffickers in Devon/Continued

The judge has recommended that the traffickers be deported after completing their jail sentences.

A spokesman for Devon and Cornwall Serious and Organised Crime Branch said “The scale of the operation demonstrated that police and partner agencies are committed to tackling the exploitation and trafficking of workers in Devon and Cornwall as well as targeting those who seek to gain from others' suffering. Our priority is to safeguard the victims of human trafficking and modern slavery while sending a strong message that Devon and Cornwall will not tolerate this type of criminality.

“We want to encourage victims of human trafficking and slavery, and anyone who may be aware of, or suspect such activity, to come forward to police and report offences with the confidence that it will be taken seriously.”

A sad story but with a positive outcome. He adds “The fantastic outcome is that all of the victims are now safe, some back in the Czech Republic and others in Devon and Cornwall, working and living independent lives, free from the mental and physical shackles of oppression.

“The 57 year old victim elected to remain in the UK. He is working and has access to all of his own wages. He has undergone a complete physical transformation and is very happy. He showed one of the investigation team his wallet which contained his wages and you would have thought that he had won the National Lottery.

“He says he feels as free as a bird.”

Can we have 10 minutes of your time right now?

In just 10 minutes you can do 4 amazing things to help in the fight against trafficking

1. Store the Modern Slavery Hotline number on your phone so you can report any suspicions you may have: **0800 0121 700**.

If the situation is urgent then ring 999.

2. Sign our petition to ban 'sex for sale' advertising click: [Ban "sex for sale" advertising](#)

3. Sort out any unwanted bras, to send to us

4. Ask all your email contacts to do the same

Those 10 minutes of your time could stop a woman being sexually exploited against her will and help a rescued woman to start earning her own living, safe from being re-trafficked.

Thank you very much.

We hope this newsletter has given you some insight into what people are currently doing to raise awareness of trafficking. If there is anything you are doing, then please tell us about it. We would love to hear from you.

We are so grateful for any [fundraising](#) or [donations](#) and you can also donate when you shop with [Give as you Live](#) .

You can rest assured that the money will be put to excellent use supporting survivors of trafficking and modern slavery. All our charity members work voluntarily as part of their [Soroptimist International](#) commitment to ending violence against women and children.

Thank you so much for your support. You can contact us on enquiries@purpleteardrop