

# Modern Slavery

## Introduction and outline

It is difficult to understand how, in 2022, that the two words 'Modern' and 'Slavery' can actually occur in the same sentence. But, sadly, some two hundred years after the Slave Trade Act of 1807, Slavery is still an issue. In fact, currently it is estimated that 40.3 million people are in some form of Modern Slavery today, with some 136,000 in the UK.

This series of three articles will look at the following topics

*a. Understanding Modern Slavery*

*b. Detection*

*c. Prevention*

## Understanding Modern Slavery

Before we can detect Modern Slavery and look for the tell-tale signs, we must first understand what Modern Slavery is. As previously mentioned, an estimated 40.3 million people are in some form of Modern Slavery, but how can this happen in 2022? Well at the core of this is **DECEPTION**; the offer of a better life or opportunity, which turns out to be a lie. The perpetrators of Modern Slavery prey on and exploit the vulnerable who often end up working in difficult degrading conditions with little or no pay. So why do they stay in these conditions? The threat of **VIOLENCE** to themselves or their families is used to keep them compliant and trap them in their situation.

If we were to outline a 'Business Model' for how this might work, it could look something like this:

1. people are treated as commodities...not as humans
2. lured into slavery through deceit, the job offered turns out to be a lie and they are forced to work in difficult, degrading conditions, for little pay
3. chilling levels of violence and threats used to keep them compliant, so difficult to escape
4. high earnings for the perpetrators
5. plentiful supply of potential slaves

The last point is extremely concerning, given the perfect storm that we see in the UK, namely:

- Soaring energy prices
- Changes to Universal Credit
- Ending of 'Furlough'

As people's finances become more challenged, so they may potentially become an easy target for a perpetrator's offer of 'help'.

The perpetrators are clever and make sure their crimes are difficult to discover and this is helped by our modern busy lives where the perpetrators preying on the vulnerable can often go unnoticed, especially in areas where there is no sense of community and where there are fragmented lives, fragmented families, fragmented relationships.

The Clewer Initiative, who seek to raise awareness of all aspects of modern slavery and help support victims and vulnerable groups by mobilising local churches and communities, use

some interesting language. Some of their language and training material points to the fact that Modern Slavery may happen in our communities, but we do not notice it. Modern Slavery happening, but not seen! Some of this language includes:

- *Hidden Voices*
- *Women in the Shadows*
- *Hidden in Plain Sight*
- *We see You*

For further information visit the Clewer Initiative website at **[theclewerinitiative.org](https://theclewerinitiative.org)**

The next article will explore Detection and the tell-tale signs of Modern Slavery.

*The Modern Slavery in Cornwall Network – April 2022*

# Modern Slavery

## Introduction

This article builds on the previous one, (published in Apr 2022) which outlined what Modern Slavery is. The core of which is deception, often accompanied with violence to ensure that slaves remain compliant. This article explores detection and the tell-tale signs of Modern Slavery.

## Typical Victim and types of Modern Slavery

To address Modern Slavery we need to be observant and must know what signs to look for. However, before considering detection and tell-tale signs it is worth looking at a typical victim and the types of modern slavery.

Well, actually there is no typical victim. Modern slaves can be of any age, race or gender.

There are three main types of Slavery, these are:

- Labour Exploitation
- Sexual Exploitation
- Domestic Servitude

Additionally, there are other types which should be recognised and include:

- Organ Harvesting
- Debt Bondage
- Forced Marriage
- Financial Exploitation
- Criminal Exploitation

An example of which is County Lines which is one of the most prevalent forms of Criminal Exploitation. This is where drug dealers from large cities drive out local drug dealers in smaller towns and exploit children and vulnerable people to sell drugs. Children are groomed and then once caught up in this evil trade are exposed to violence or threat of violence to ensure they remain compliant to what is being asked of them. The perpetrators prey on marginalised children who have often been let down by multiple agencies.

## Detection and Tell-Tale signs

Tell-tale signs may be apparent in:

- Physical appearance
- Workplace
- Accommodation

When put together these signs could highlight possible Modern Slavery concerns. Taking each category in turn:

- Physical appearance: victims may:
  - have injuries that appear to be the result of assault
  - look malnourished
  - be withdrawn
  - have poor hygiene
- Workplace: victims may:
  - Work excessively long hours over lengthy periods
  - Not have any days off
  - Wear the same clothes everyday

- Always be supervised
- Never leave the workplace alone
- Rarely interact with other workmates
- Accommodation
  - If a house is overcrowded with young men, this could be a sign of labour exploitation.
  - If overcrowded with young women, this could be a sign of sexual exploitation.
- Sadly, young people can be victims of modern slavery, as with County Lines and some of the tell-tale signs are:
  - Unexplained new possessions
  - Driven around by unknown adults
  - New designer clothes
  - Truancy
  - Injuries

### Pause and Reflection

Biblical Reflection based on Matthew 22 v34-40.

Who is my neighbour?

- The refugee, escaping from a war-torn homeland and ends up in Domestic servitude, or worse.
- The homeless young man who ends up in Labour exploitation.

To consolidate the points outlined in this article and to put them in context, if you are able, please watch the film (see details below) about a young man who leaves home and then gets caught in Modern Slavery. In particular, please look out for:

- How the victim became so vulnerable
- The offer of help by the perpetrator
- The type of work he was expected to do and the training given
- The threat of violence
- The outcome

**<https://theclewerinitiative.org/stories/charlies-story>**

## Further Information and contact details



**Modern Slavery  
in Cornwall**

**WHO TO CONTACT**

If you suspect someone is a victim of modern slavery, please call one of the following numbers:

Modern Slavery Helpline **08000 121 700**

Crimestoppers **0800 555 111**  
(Completely anonymous)

Local police **101**  
Emergency **999**

Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority  
**0800 4320 804**

Salvation Army confidential referral helpline  
**0800 808 3733**

Or visit [crimestoppers-uk.org](https://crimestoppers-uk.org) to report information about a crime safely and anonymously.

**REPORT IT! IF NOT YOU, WHO? IF NOT NOW, WHEN?**

THE CLEWER INITIATIVE | NEW 52 | TRANSFORMATION CORNWALL | DIOCESE OF TRURO | FIDMOUTH PARISH CHURCHES Together | UNITED CHURCHES OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Modern Slavery is an increasing problem and the Transformation Cornwall website provides a comprehensive list of available resources. Please visit the site at the link below:

<https://transformation-cornwall.org.uk/initiatives/a-modern-slavery-initiative>

The next article will explore opportunities of Preventing Modern Slavery.

*The Modern Slavery in Cornwall Network – May 2022*

# Modern Slavery

## Introduction

This final article builds on the previous two, which outlined both what Modern Slavery is and the tell-tale signs that can help detect it. This final article looks at opportunities for Prevention and will start with a Biblical Reflection.

## Biblical Reflection

Reference - 2Kings 4: 1-7

**Elisha and the Widow's Oil.** In this passage we see a widow who has lost her husband and is now faced with the unbearable threat of losing her two sons if she is unable to pay her late husband's debt. If she is unable to pay this debt her late husband's creditor will take her two sons into slavery.

The miracle that followed produced an abundance of oil from just one small jar and provided enough money to pay off the debt as well as provide money for the future.

## Prevention

In the context of this article, it is worth reflecting on three ideas:

- a. That all things are possible with God's help
- b. It required the community to help
- c. No jar was too small. They did not go to their neighbours and just ask for large jars

Elaborating these three ideas in turn:

### **Prayer :**

Modern Slavery is an enormous problem and sadly engrained in many areas of our modern life. Given the enormity of the problem, it is easy to become paralysed and think.... 'Well, actually what can *I* do to help?'

Of course, one thing we can all do is to remember Modern Slavery in our prayers and the following link provides some useful resources. *Sometimes, it is helpful to use pre-written prayers, which help to focus our minds on the issue.*

<https://theclewerinitiative.org/resources/prayers-for-ending-modern-slavery>

### **Community :**

*"The scale of modern slavery and human trafficking is increasing steadily and the threat is growing"*  
– National Crime Agency

That said, Modern Slavery is unable to grow and thrive in communities which are Safe, Inclusive and Caring; where vulnerable people are recognised, cared for and not allowed to be exploited by perpetrators. In the **Elisha and the Widow's Oil** reflection, it was the community that rallied around to help the vulnerable family. It is this approach that will stop Modern Slavery thriving in our communities. Raising awareness of Modern Slavery, both for ourselves and our communities would be a good place to start. A recommended way to do this would be to join the **Modern Slavery in Cornwall Network**. The Network meets bi-monthly, via Zoom, and exists to raise awareness of modern slavery issues in our county and how we can all help to bring an end to this injustice and support those who have fallen victim to it. The Network is a mutually supportive group of people and offers a safe space to explore issues, share resources, highlight best practice and plan action

relating to modern slavery in Cornwall. Please email [newstreet@mg.churchsuite.com](mailto:newstreet@mg.churchsuite.com) for further details and a welcoming and friendly response.

**No Action is too small :**

This is the third idea, taken from the biblical reflection and in itself is a small point, but actually an especially important one.

No action is too small and may simply be:

- a. Placing a poster in your local church, or village hall. Please email [newstreet@mg.churchsuite.com](mailto:newstreet@mg.churchsuite.com) for posters.
- b. Attending a training course, or joining the Modern Slavery in Cornwall Network, as mentioned above.
- c. Recognising, where in your community, vulnerable people could be open to exploitation.
- d. Being a positive role model within your Sphere of Influence, whether that is within your Family, Church, Workplace or where you live. (The point here is that vulnerable people who are at risk of being drawn into modern slavery may have no positive role models).

**Training Material and Further Information**

A comprehensive list of available resources can be found at the Transformation Cornwall website. Please visit the site at the link below:

**<https://transformation-cornwall.org.uk/initiatives/a-modern-slavery-initiative>**

Resources from The Clewer Initiative can be found at the following link:

**<https://theclewerinitiative.org/training-courses>**

To conclude, here is a prayer written by the Mothers Union. Sometimes it is hard to know how to pray and using other people's words can be helpful.

*God - our constant friend of all time,  
Help all women, men and children who are used in trafficking to find in your arms,  
the love and respect that they have been denied.  
When people are trafficked across the world,  
treated as slaves and exploited mercilessly -  
be there for them in their darkest hours.  
May their vision of the world still hold a glimmer of hope;  
may we, through Christ working in us,  
fight for an end to trafficking and an end to every abuse and to an end to every way in which the  
weak or vulnerable are exploited by the strong.  
Amen.*

With Blessings....

*The Modern Slavery in Cornwall Network – June 2022*