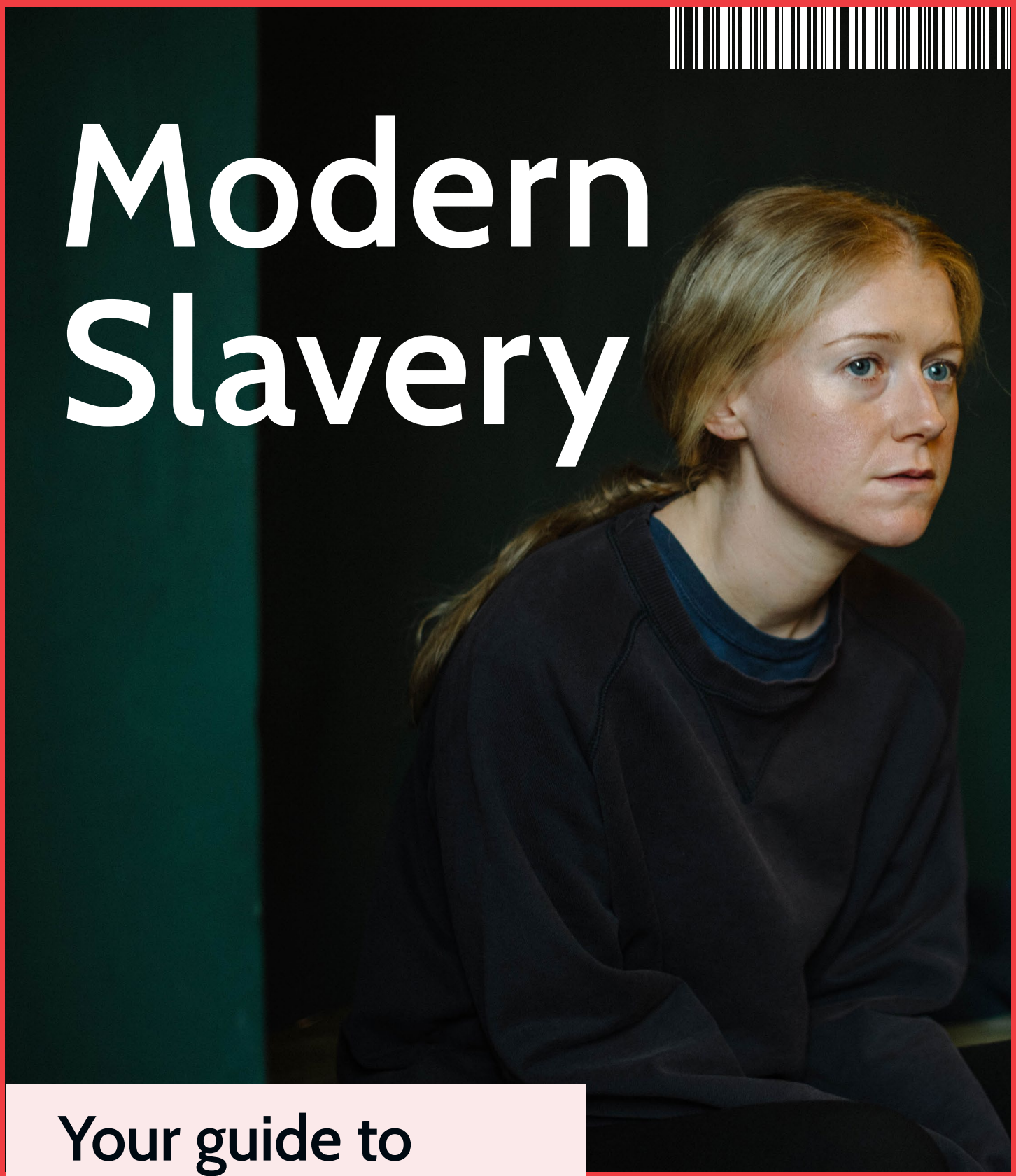
Modern Slavery



Your guide to spotting the signs

THE SALVATION ARMY

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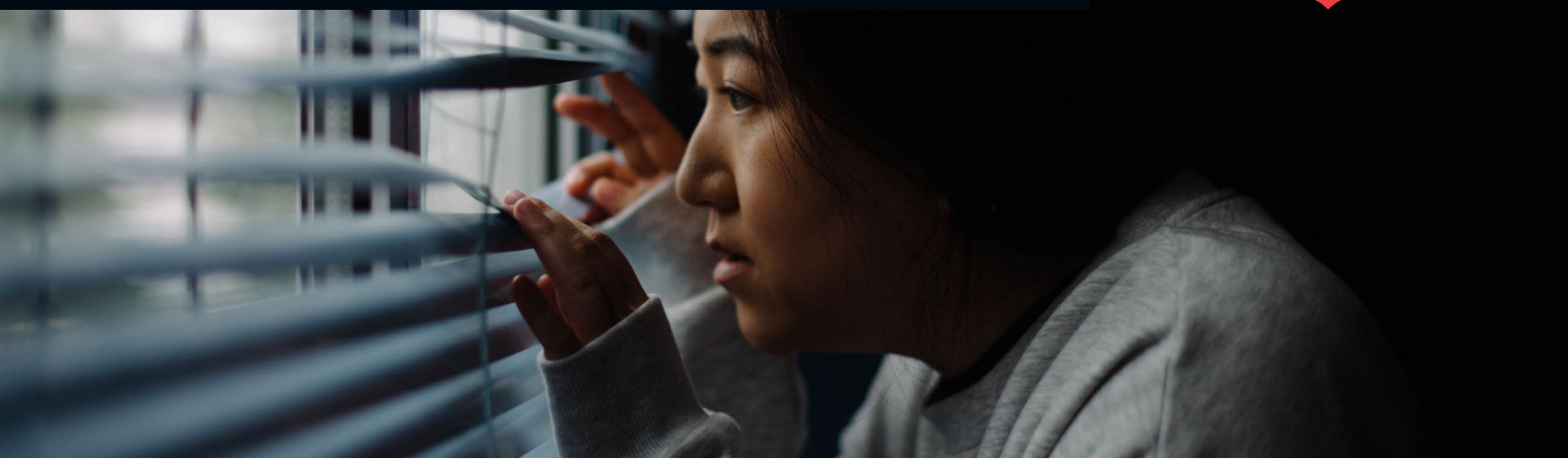

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About The Guide

Modern slavery is a global problem, which needs a global response. There are an estimated 50 million people in modern slavery in the world today. The Salvation Army is present in over 130 countries worldwide and makes responding to modern slavery and human trafficking a global priority.

Closer to home, there are an estimated 122,000 people trapped in modern slavery across the UK. This guide brings you stories of modern slavery survivors and is your starting point to understanding the realities of modern slavery in the UK today.

Through survivor stories, interactive scenarios, and insights from our frontline work, you'll learn how to spot the signs of modern slavery in your area, and how you can take meaningful action. Whether you're curious, concerned, or ready to make a difference, this guide will help bring the issue to light - and inform you of what you can do to help.

Major Kathy Betteridge
Director of Anti Trafficking and Modern Slavery for The Salvation Army

"Many [survivors] tell us we are like family to them. We are proud to walk with them - and, like supportive family, prouder still to see them step out to the futures they choose."

What Is Modern Slavery?

Modern slavery is when someone loses their freedom and is controlled and exploited by another person or people for personal or commercial gain. It is an umbrella term for many forms of slavery, including, but not exclusive to, human trafficking.

It can take many different forms, but usually involves tricking, threatening or forcing people into work for little or no pay, whether in private homes, in other workplaces, committing crimes, or sexual exploitation - all to profit the trafficker.

Modern slavery is still happening across the UK today; people are being coerced into work, crime, or abuse - often in plain sight. Victims may be isolated, unable to speak English, or fearful of seeking help due to threats against themselves or their families.

BRITISH NATIONALS
were the most common nationality among potential UK modern slavery victims in 2024.

It Can Happen to Anyone

Men, women, and children from all walks of life can be affected. Some are deceived with false promises; others are trapped by poverty, addiction, or unstable living conditions. What they all have in common is a loss of control over their own lives.

Why Awareness Matters

The signs aren't always obvious - but learning to spot them can save lives. By recognising when something doesn't feel right and reporting concerns, we can help stop exploitation and support survivors on their journey to recovery.

"Today I can speak to you because of what I received from The Salvation Army and I speak, not as a victim, but as a survivor."
- Franck

Supporting Survivors

The Salvation Army provides specialist support for all adult survivors of modern slavery in England and Wales through its delivery of the Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract, which it was first awarded in 2011 from the Government.

The contract ensures modern slavery survivors referred to The Salvation Army receives sensitive support to meet their recovery needs, whether that is within a safe house or through outreach support, access to specialist legal advice, healthcare, counselling, education or employment support.

We add to this support through The Salvation Army's **Survivors Support Fund** giving survivors the best possible chance to recover and build a positive, independent future.

Through charitable donations, the fund helps survivors ease their transition to independent living. This might be in the form of a grant to help pay for school or work uniforms, essential technology to aid in job hunting or household items for furnishing their home.

> **"Now, with the help of The Salvation Army, I'm getting my confidence back. I know my future is very bright and hopeful."**
> - Rose

Through the Survivors Support Fund, The Salvation Army has provided financial assistance for some of our partners to pilot innovative group schemes such as cooking classes, friendship programmes and employment and training opportunities. We also employ a dedicated Survivor Inclusion and Engagement Specialist to facilitate empowerment, ensuing survivors have a voice and can actively participate in their community.

Find out more

24,565

The number of modern slavery survivors The Salvation Army has supported in England and Wales since 2011.

Spot The Signs In Your Neighbourhood

It's not just something that happens far away or in hidden corners of society - it's happening here, in communities across the UK, often in plain sight.

People you see in streets and shops, farms, and factories, building sites and bars could be living and working in appalling conditions, held against their will.

That's why it's so important to stay alert to the signs. By recognising the indicators - such as restricted freedom, poor living conditions, or signs of abuse - we can all play a role in helping survivors find safety and support. **Awareness is the first step towards action.**

They may have untreated injuries

1

They may look anxious, dishevelled, or malnourished

2

If you suspect that someone you've come across might be a victim of modern slavery, call The Salvation Army's referral helpline 24/7 on 0800 808 3733. You can also call the main Modern Slavery helpline on 08000 121 700 to report suspicious activity. **If someone is in immediate danger call 999.**

Spot The Signs In Your Neighbourhood

They may have someone paying for their travel who may also speak for them

3

They may look fearful and unwilling to engage

4

Watch this video to learn more about how you can spot the signs of modern slavery

"One of the regular customers started to ask why I was always working there and why I didn't go to school. I confided in him and told him my whole story... He told me I could trust the police and he was right."
- Rose

Survivor Story: Mark

“If sharing my story can save someone, then I want to tell it”

Mark’s experience of modern slavery began during a vulnerable time in his life. Battling addiction, serious health issues, and homelessness, he was approached by a group of men offering what seemed like a lifeline - money in exchange for work. But the work was dangerous and illegal: selling drugs on the streets. What felt like friendship quickly turned into control.

The men manipulated Mark’s addiction, paid him mostly in drugs, and forced him to work exhausting hours - from early morning until late at night. They denied him access to medical care and kept him isolated. **“I was in a really bad way,”** Mark recalls. **“They stopped me getting methadone and help for ulcers on my legs.”**

Mark didn’t realise he was a victim of modern slavery. But local agencies had been monitoring his situation, and when the police intervened, he felt safe at last. His traffickers were prosecuted, and Mark was taken to a Salvation Army safe house - a turning point in his recovery.

From the moment he arrived, Mark was met with compassion. **“The manager was waiting for me on a Friday evening. In my room was a table full of essentials - toiletries, a payment card, and a voucher for clothes. It meant everything.”**

The Salvation Army provided more than just shelter. They supported Mark through addiction recovery, helped him access urgent healthcare, and offered emotional support. Today, Mark has been free from hard drugs for over three years. **“They are like family to me,”** he says. **“They know how I’m feeling before I say a word.”**

Now Mark is rebuilding his life and looking for a home of his own and hopes to return to work soon, ideally in a role where he can help others who’ve experienced trauma. Thanks to The Salvation Army’s dedicated support, Mark has found safety, dignity, and hope for the future.

Quiz:
What Would You Do?

As we've explored in this guide - modern slavery is often closer than you think. Take this quiz to ask yourself what you would do in these scenarios, then check the QR code or link at the bottom of this page to reveal the answers.

1. A neighbouring house has several people living in their home. The individuals rarely leave, seem anxious, and are picked up and dropped off at odd hours. What would you do?

A. Ignore it - it's none of your business
B. Knock on the door and check in on the inhabitants
C. Report it anonymously to the Modern Slavery Helpline or authorities
D. Post about it on social media

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2. You meet someone who says they're working but doesn't know where they are, has no access to their ID or wages, and is afraid of their employer. What's the safest next step?

A. Contact a local support organisation or helpline
B. Encourage them to leave immediately
C. Offer them money
D. Tell them to go to the police

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3. A young person is seen begging regularly in town, always accompanied by an older adult who watches them closely. What could this suggest?

A. They're helping a relative
B. They're part of a family business
C. They're just trying to earn money
D. They may be victims of forced criminality

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4. You see an online job ad offering high pay for unskilled work, with no interview required and vague contact details. What should you do?

A. Apply quickly before it's gone
B. Share it with friends
C. Report it as suspicious
D. Ignore it

Scan the QR code to reveal answers or visit the link below
tsa.link/reveal

If you suspect that someone you've come across might be a victim of modern slavery, call The Salvation Army's referral helpline 24/7 on 0800 808 3733. You can also call the main Modern Slavery helpline on 08000 121 700 to report suspicious activity. **If someone is in immediate danger call 999.**

How You Can Help

Thousands of modern slavery victims are hidden in plain sight in towns and cities across the UK. We need your help to find them and get them the support they need to rebuild their lives. There are several ways you can help to show your support.

Volunteer

Volunteers play an integral role in supporting victims. At The Salvation Army, we have a network of volunteers who provide support and vital services to help aid victims in their recovery journey.

Three roles that make a difference:

1. **First Responders:** are the first point of contact for potential victims. Through phone, video, or face-to-face interviews, they help explain the situation to the authorities so the survivor can begin their journey to safety and support.

2. **Transport Volunteers:** this team includes drivers and chaperones who help survivors reach safe accommodation. Every journey is a lifeline.

3. **Mentors:** this team supports survivors as they rebuild their lives. They help them set goals, offer practical guidance, and use proven tools to help them move forward with confidence.

Find out more

"I've learned that change is possible through the right support. I like to think I can give people hope, and then the modern slavery support team at The Salvation Army can grow that hope into a vibrant, healthy and safe life."
- Volunteer First Responder

Write to your MP

Join us in calling for the Government to restore the rights of survivors so they get the help they need.

Find out more

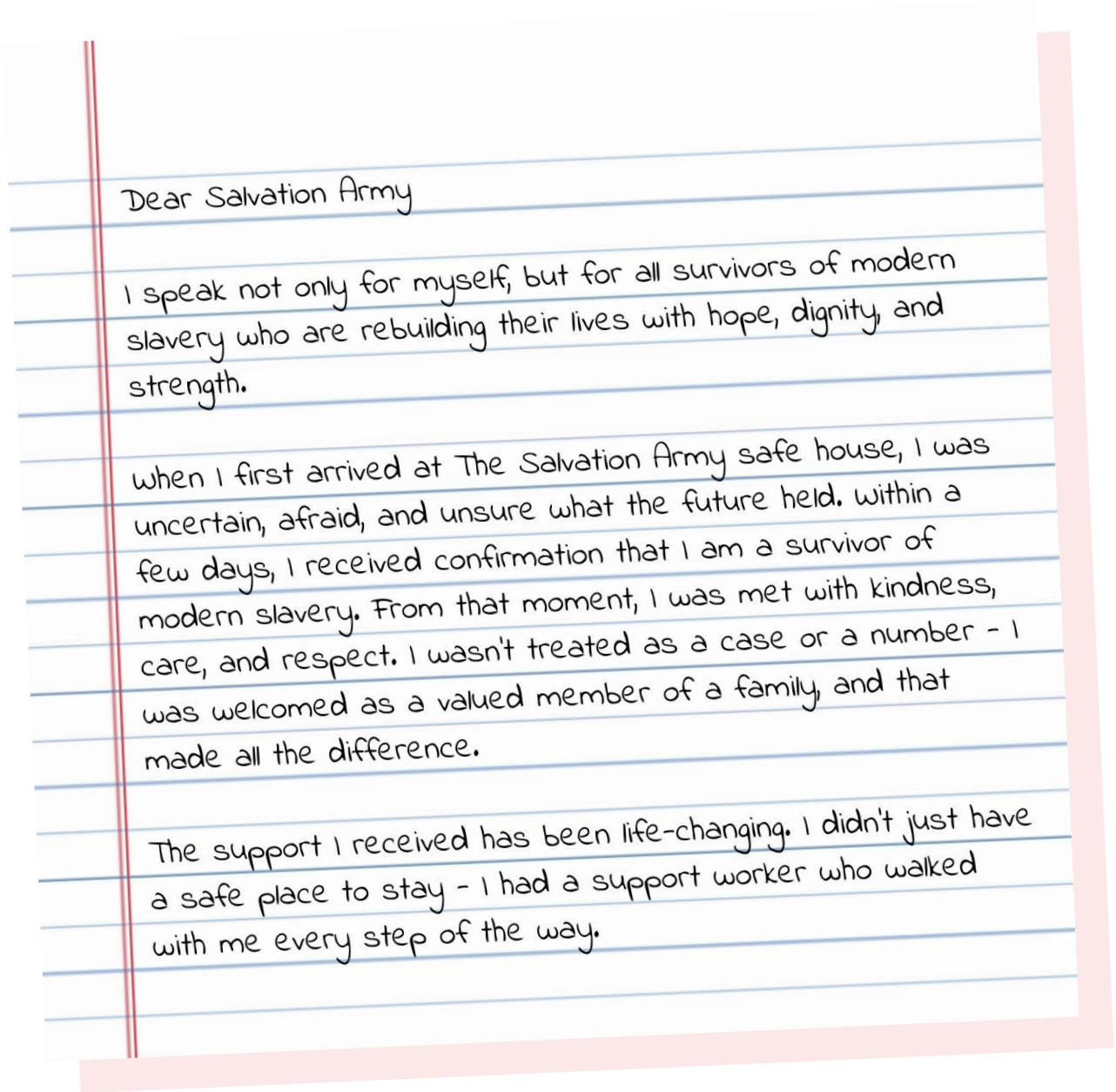
Share a post on social media

Help raise awareness of Modern Slavery by sharing a post on social media.

Download

A Survivor's Voice

The Salvation Army has supported over 24,565 survivors of modern slavery since it was awarded the government's victim care contract in 2011. Hear directly from one of them about their recovery journey and the support they've been given since.



Dear Salvation Army

I speak not only for myself, but for all survivors of modern slavery who are rebuilding their lives with hope, dignity, and strength.

When I first arrived at The Salvation Army safe house, I was uncertain, afraid, and unsure what the future held. Within a few days, I received confirmation that I am a survivor of modern slavery. From that moment, I was met with kindness, care, and respect. I wasn't treated as a case or a number - I was welcomed as a valued member of a family, and that made all the difference.

The support I received has been life-changing. I didn't just have a safe place to stay - I had a support worker who walked with me every step of the way.

A Survivor's Voice

She helped me register with a GP, access counselling, financial support and connect with a legal representative. She guided me to write my CV and volunteer at the Salvation Army café, which helped me feel part of a community again. Sometimes, she would treat me to a hot chocolate and a friendly chat. Those small moments of kindness reminded me that I mattered, that I was safe, and that hope was possible.

The Salvation Army Survivor Support Fund gave me the financial and emotional support to rebuild my life. I am now a stronger, more independent woman - a woman who will not be exploited again. I am forever grateful to The Salvation Army. They have given me safety, healing, hope, and a real future. Every survivor deserves that chance. No one should ever be left behind. God bless every single person who works with compassion, humanity, and love.

Rohina

JUST £10

could provide a pack of toiletries to help someone like Rohina when they take their first step toward freedom in a Salvation Army safe house.

DONATE NOW

Voices of Freedom: The Dreams Choir

When survivors of modern slavery come into the care of The Salvation Army, they often carry deep emotional scars. For some, even speaking out loud can feel overwhelming. That's why specialist support worker and musician Nigel Long created the 'Dreams' choir - a unique choir formed by The Salvation Army to support survivors of modern slavery through the healing power of music.

> "We wanted to help survivors we were working with in their recovery to build a sense of community as well as have fun through music."
> - Nigel – Specialist Support Worker

Created four years ago as an extension of support provided by the charity through the Government's Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract, the choir brings together survivors and support staff to share songs, food and friendship. For many members, it is the first safe space they can express themselves freely, build confidence and find courage for the future.

Dreams has performed for audiences including Ed Sheeran, Idris Elba and HRH Princess Eugenie, and last Christmas sang at a Salvation Army concert attended by Safeguarding Minister Jess Phillips MP. Yet the impact goes far beyond the stage. As Wendy, a choir member, explains: →

Through music, friendship and solidarity, Dreams shows survivors that their voices matter. It is not only a choir, but a community where healing begins and hope takes root.

The Survivor Support Fund helps make moments like this possible - funding the creative, therapeutic, and practical support that goes beyond basic support. If you believe in restoring dignity and rebuilding lives, please consider donating today.

DONATE NOW

> "This group gives me a chance to process my emotions. I cry a lot and I'm scared to face new things in my life, but when I came here, it gave me courage and inspiration."

You've Seen the Signs - Now Take the Next Step

Thank you for exploring our guide on spotting the signs of modern slavery. We hope it's helped you feel more informed, more aware, and more empowered to take action. Modern slavery is a hidden crime - but together, we can bring it into the light. Whether it's sharing this guide, starting a conversation, or simply staying alert, your awareness could change a life.

Watch this video to learn more about how The Salvation Army supports survivors of modern slavery.

You can also read more about our work, how we support survivors, and meet more of the people we support on our website.

Discover more

To hear the latest news from The Salvation Army, follow us on our socials using the handle **@salvationarmyuk**

Remember, if you suspect that someone you've come across might be a victim of modern slavery and is in need of help, call The Salvation Army's confidential referral helpline 24/7 on 0800 808 3733. You can also call the main Modern Slavery helpline on 08000 121 700 to report suspicious activity. **If someone is in immediate danger call 999.**

A Christian church and registered charity in England (214779), Wales (214779), Scotland (SC009359) and the Republic of Ireland (CHY6399). The Salvation Army Territorial Headquarters, 1 Champion Park, London, SE5 8FJ

*Please note all figures in this toolkit refer to the year of July 2023 - June 2024 unless otherwise stated.
**The people featured in this guide reflect the true stories of people that we help every day.
Names have been changed and models used in some photographs to protect the privacy of the people concerned.