

WIRRAL MODERN SLAVERY STRATEGY

2018 - 2021

THE WIRRAL PARTNERSHIP



INTRODUCTION

FOREWORD

I am proud to present Wirral's Strategy for Modern Slavery on behalf of Wirral Council and the Wirral Partnership.

Wirral recognises that slavery is not a thing of the past but continues in the modern era, often with devastating effects upon its victims

Aligning with the Merseyside Police and Crime Plan 2017-2012 we will improve upon the good work that is already taking place across the Wirral to deliver on our Pledge:

'Wirral Neighbourhoods are Safe'

Wirral will not tolerate Modern Slavery in any of its guises under any circumstances.

The purpose of this document is to set out the strategic approach Wirral will adopt, working together as an effective partnership with communities, to protect our most vulnerable and ensure criminals are held to account using all the powers at our disposal.

We will ensure the successful implementation of the strategy through the oversight of the Safer Wirral Partnership Board.



*Councillor Paul Stuart
Wirral Cabinet Member - Law and Order
Chair of Safer Wirral Partnership Board*

INTRODUCTION

The word **'slavery'** is synonymous with one of the darkest chapters in human history, where for over 400 years, more than 15 million men, women and children were the victims of the tragic transatlantic slave trade where the enslaved person became considered the legal property of someone else, to be bought and sold.

MODERN SLAVERY

Modern slavery refers to slavery that continues to exist in present day society

Modern slavery is a serious crime. It encompasses slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking. Modern slavery victims can often face more than one type of abuse and slavery, for example if they are sold to another trafficker and then forced into another form of exploitation.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

A person is trafficked if they are brought to (or moved around) a country by others who threaten, frighten, hurt and force them to do work or other things they don't want to do.

In 2016 it was estimated 45.8 million men women and children from every part of the globe were victims of modern slavery.¹

Estimates of the number of modern slavery victims in the world today vary between 21 and 70 million.

Modern Slavery goes unnoticed or unreported because many victims are unable or reluctant to engage with authorities (or may not be recognised as victims of this kind of offending if they do) and may be moved frequently across geographical boundaries. While the plight of victims remains unseen and unresolved, offenders can and will continue to exploit them.

In 2014 the Home Office estimates there were between 10,000 and 13,000 potential victims of modern slavery in the UK.²

The true number is likely to be far higher. In the National Crime Agency press release, 10 August 2017, Director of Vulnerabilities, Will Kerr stated: "The growing body of evidence we are collecting points to the scale [of modern slavery in the UK] being far larger than anyone had previously thought."³

¹ 2016 Global Slavery Index 2016 Website

² Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner Strategic Plan 2015-17

³ www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/1171-law-enforcement-steps-up-response-to-modern-slavery

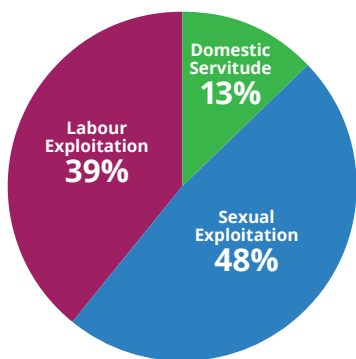
VICTIMS OF SLAVERY

Between 2011 and 2017 there was a 300% increase in the number of modern slavery victims in the UK, being supported as a consequence of a referral into the NRM

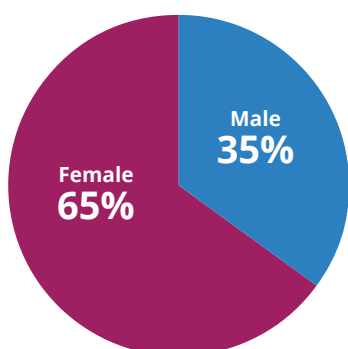
Of those victims almost two thirds are women and just over a third male.

Grouping victims into three broad exploitation categories; 13% suffered domestic servitude, 39% labour exploitation, and 48% sexual exploitation.

EXPLOITATION TYPES 2017

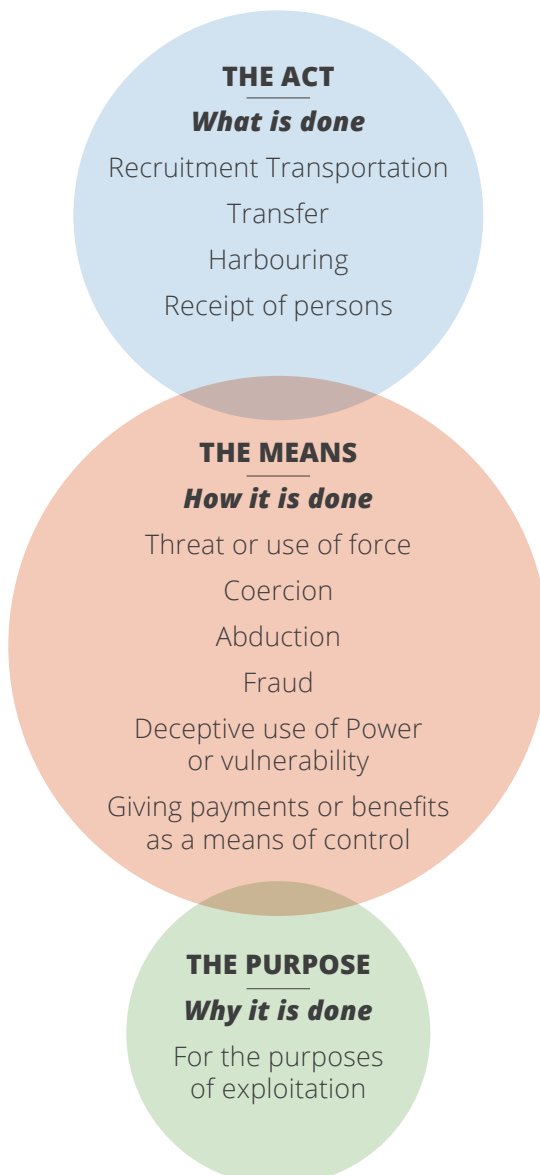


VICTIM GENDER 2017



PALERMO PROTOCOL

The Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children is a protocol of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. It provides an internationally recognised definition for human trafficking. To be considered human trafficking, a situation must meet three conditions: The act (e.g. recruitment), the means (e.g. through the use of force or deception), and the purpose (e.g. for the purpose of forced labour). All three components must be present in an adult trafficking case. However in a child trafficking case the 'means' component is not required as they are not able to give informed consent.



⁴ Salvation Army – 2017 Annual Report

THE MODERN SLAVERY ACT 2015

The stated purpose of the Modern Slavery Act was to “tackle the worst exploitation” and consolidate various offences relating to human trafficking and slavery.

THE ACT:

- Established the role of an Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner with a UK-wide remit to encourage good practice in the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of modern slavery offences and the identification of victims.
- Provides victims with greater protections and police with greater powers. It also requires businesses to report on the action they are taking to identify and address slavery in their supply chains. Any organisation with a turnover greater than £36m needs to produce a Modern Slavery Act Annual Statement and have an Anti-Slavery Policy.
- Allows for the introduction of independent child trafficking advocates.
- Introduces new civil restriction orders, including a new reparation order to compensate victims where assets are confiscated from perpetrators.
- Brings in new statutory defence for victims who are compelled to commit crimes.

DEFINITIONS

Slavery Someone is in ‘slavery’ if they are:

- Forced to work through mental or physical threat
- Owned or controlled by an ‘employer’, usually through mental or physical abuse
- Dehumanised ~ treated as a commodity or bought and sold as ‘property’
- Physically constrained or have restrictions placed on their freedom.⁵

Servitude⁶ is similar to slavery, in that a person is under an obligation to provide a service which is imposed on them, but there is no element of ownership.

Forced work⁷ is defined as ‘work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the person has not offered himself voluntarily⁶ and has been found in a number of different industries including manufacturing, food processing, agriculture and hospitality.

Human trafficking is when men, women and children are moved and forced into exploitation. The movement could be international but also within the country, from one city to another or even just a few streets. A person is a victim of human trafficking even if they haven't yet been exploited but have been moved for the purposes of exploitation.

Merseyside was the first police force to successfully prosecute under the act

⁵ www.unseenuk.org/about/the-problem/modern-slavery

⁶ www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights-act/article-4-freedom-slavery-and-forced-labour

⁷ www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/definition/lang--en/index.htm

There are a number of different types of exploitation that victims of modern slavery may be subjected to, and victims may experience more than one type of exploitation at the same time. The most common forms of exploitation are:

Sexual exploitation: Victims may be forced into prostitution, pornography or lap dancing for little or no pay. They may be deprived of their freedom of movement and subjected to threats and violence.

Organ harvesting: Victims are trafficked in order for their internal organs (typically kidneys or the liver) to be harvested for transplant.

Labour exploitation: A victim is made to work with little or no pay, and may face violence or threats. If they are foreign nationals, their passports may be confiscated by their exploiters and they may be made to live in unsafe conditions and under constant threat and control.

Domestic servitude: victims are forced to work in a household for little or no pay where they may be ill-treated, humiliated, subjected to exhausting hours, working and living under unsafe conditions under constant threat and control.

Forced criminality: Victims can be forced to participate in a range of illegal activities including pick pocketing, shop lifting, cannabis cultivation, county lines exploitation* and other activities. The Modern Slavery Act provides for a defence for victims who have been forced into criminality.

County lines: County Lines is the police term for urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas and towns using dedicated mobile phone lines – these are the county lines. It involves child criminal exploitation (CCE) as gangs use children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money.



A woman with blonde hair, wearing a dark, sleeveless dress and black boots, stands in a doorway at night. She is looking out onto a street where a building with lit windows is visible. The interior of the room is dimly lit with a warm, reddish glow, while the exterior is dark with some streetlights. The word "BACKGROUND" is overlaid in large, white, bold letters across the center of the image.

BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND

In the UK, today and every day, thousands of men, women and children who are victims of modern slavery and human trafficking are being degraded and dehumanised.

These crimes are multi-faceted. Cases may involve single or multiple offenders or victims, and may be national or international, organised or opportunistic. They occur in both rural and metropolitan areas, in settings ranging from nail bars to construction sites, and involve activities from domestic servitude to the trafficking of children for sexual exploitation.

The National Crime Agency is the national law enforcement agency established in 2009 with the responsibility for tackling serious

and organised crime and reducing its impact on the UK and on our communities.

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 builds on the **Modern Slavery Strategy** published by the Coalition Government in 2014. The UK is the first country in the world to have dedicated legislation in place to tackle modern slavery. Like the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy, it is based around the 4Ps framework of pursue, prevent, protect and prepare:

	<p>PURSUE</p> <p>Prosecute and disrupt individuals and groups responsible for modern slavery</p>		<p>PROTECT</p> <p>Safeguard against modern slavery by protecting vulnerable people from exploitation</p>
	<p>PREVENT</p> <p>Prevent people from engaging in modern slavery</p>		<p>PREPARE</p> <p>Reduce the harm caused by modern slavery through improved victim identification and enforcement support</p>

The Government's Modern Slavery Strategy is particularly focussed on the law enforcement response, although the roles of Local Authorities in safeguarding and caring for children and tackling child sexual exploitation are particularly referenced.

In 2016 the Prime Minister announced a new Modern Slavery Taskforce, which sits at the center of Government, to drive further progress in tackling slavery and human trafficking.

THE GANGMASTERS LABOUR ABUSE AUTHORITY

The Immigration Act 2016 addresses labour exploitation and abuse in the UK and included measures to reform the Gangmasters Licensing Authority, renamed the Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority, (GLAA). The GLAA was given additional powers under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE), to investigate allegations of labour abuse in all aspects of UK business.

Since March 2017, modern slavery and human trafficking have been included in the group of national priority serious organised crime threats (alongside firearms, organised immigration crime, child sexual exploitation and abuse, cyber-crime and high-end money laundering).⁸

Police Regional Organised Crime Units, (ROCU), investigate and disrupt organised crime groups and act as a point of contact between Police Forces and the National Crime Agency. Merseyside Police Force is one of six police forces within the North West Regional Organised Crime Unit, 'Titan'.

NATIONAL REFERRAL MECHANISM

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking or modern slavery and ensures they receive the appropriate support.

Referrals to the NRM can only be made by 'competent', (authorised), agencies known as 'First Responders.' These include all those working in Local Authorities, alongside Police, UK Border Force, Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority, and several NGOs including the Salvation Army.

The **Salvation Army** was awarded the Government contract in 2011 to provide alongside twelve subcontractors (including City Hearts, and the Medaille Trust used in Merseyside), specialist support to adult victims of modern slavery in England and Wales:

- Safe accommodation
- Counselling
- Medical care
- Translation and interpretation services
- Medical care
- Legal counselling.

Being international and working in 131 countries, the Salvation Army also has projects in other countries to try to assist enslaved and trafficked people. It seeks to raise awareness, and where possible to support victims as they escape from their entrapment.⁹



MERSEYSIDE STRATEGY

Modern Slavery sits squarely within two of the Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner's five priorities¹⁰:

- Tackle serious and organised crime
- Support victims, protect vulnerable people and maintain public safety

The Merseyside Modern Slavery Strategic Group has adopted the 4Ps framework of 'pursue, prevent, protect and prepare' reflecting the Government's Modern Slavery Strategy.

⁸ www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/publications/790-nca-annual-plan-2017-18/file

⁹ www.salvationarmy.org.uk/modern-slavery

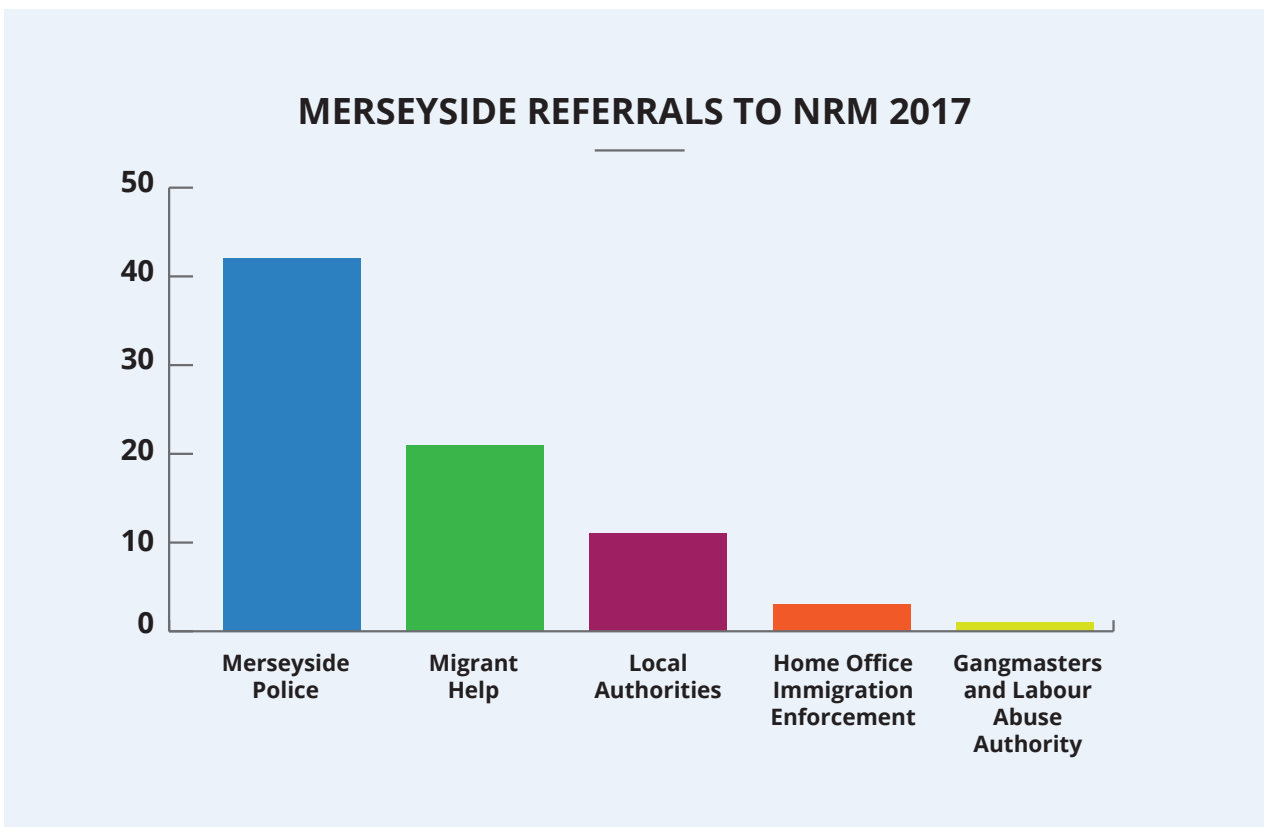
¹⁰ <https://www.merseysidepcc.info/home/about-us/janes-priorities.aspx>

In 2017, UK referrals to the National Referral Mechanism increased by 35% on the previous year, from 3,805 to 5,145, whilst in Merseyside the increase was from 38 to 89, an increase of 134%.

In 2017 Merseyside made 89 referrals to the National Referral Mechanism of which there were 5 first responders. The graph below shows the number of referrals from each first responder:

Merseyside Police works closely with key partners to tackle organised crime and protect vulnerable victims. In April 2018 Merseyside Police deployed a dedicated unit of specialist officers to work closely with key stakeholders under Operation Sanctuary. This reflects both the increasing priority of Modern Slavery and the importance of working as a coordinated multi-agency unit.

As well as the central team there are five Police Officer SPOCs (Single Point of Contact), one for each Merseyside authority.





WIRRAL ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY

As with most areas of the country Wirral has experienced a sharp increase in prosecutions made under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 since soon after its inception. Prosecutions have increased from 3 in 16/17 to 11 prosecutions in 17/18 and 12 during the first six months of 18/19.

The use of Modern Slavery legislation is expected to continue to increase across Wirral, Merseyside and nationally for the foreseeable future

The legislation predominately used to prosecute for Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking has been Sections 1 and 2 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. This applies to both adults and minors (Under 18's) and whilst crime types such as Sexual

Exploitation, Labour Exploitation and Criminal Exploitation are common for adults, the legislation is also utilised to prosecute for Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation.

During **2016/17** there were 3 Modern Slavery offences in Wirral; one related to Labour Exploitation, one Criminal Exploitation and the other a Child Trafficking case.

In **2017/18**, 11 Modern Slavery offences were in Wirral, one related to Child Sexual Exploitation, three to Child Criminal Exploitation, two to Criminal Exploitation, two to sexual exploitation, and three to Labour Exploitation.

In the first half of **2018/19** there were 12 cases in Wirral of which five related to Child Criminal Exploitation, five to Child Sexual Exploitation and two related to Adults; one Labour Exploitation and one Criminal Exploitation.

Businesses identified as most likely to include workers vulnerable to exploitation through Modern Slavery have included car washes, nail salons, massage parlours, and from a criminal perspective; brothels and cannabis cultivations.

WIRRAL COUNCIL OBLIGATIONS

Wirral Council recognises its responsibilities under the Act to take a robust approach against modern slavery and human trafficking

Under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act Councils have a duty to do all that they reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in their areas, which includes modern slavery and trafficking.

There are two sections of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 Act that immediately impact on the obligations of Wirral Council:

- **Section 52** of the Act requires the Council (as an authorised agency and 'First Responder') to identify and refer modern slavery child victims and consenting adult victims through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).
- **Section 54** of the Act requires the Council to publish a statement of the steps it has taken to ensure that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any of its supply chains, or in any part of its business



A person is shown in a crouching, hunched position against a textured, light-colored wall. The person is wearing a dark, short-sleeved shirt and light blue denim jeans. Their head is bowed, and their arms are tucked in front of them. The overall mood is somber and contemplative. The text "OUR VISION" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

OUR VISION

OUR VISION

Modern Slavery exists on Wirral’s high streets, in local businesses and in our communities.

The victims are extremely vulnerable, scared and feel powerless to speak out. This ‘hidden’ crime must be uncovered and survivors rescued.

We will ensure that everyone with a stake in Wirral understands that Modern Slavery is happening, recognise the signs and know what to do when we see them.

It is up to Wirral’s public servants, businesses and community members, to give Modern Slavery victims a voice and put an end to their suffering, by working together in partnership to identify and protect them.

We will work in league with regional and national agencies in adopting the ‘4Ps’ framework:





PERPETRATORS WILL BE DETERRED, DISRUPTED AND PROSECUTED

WHY?

Enforcement agencies and regulatory bodies have between them a combined arsenal of tools and powers that can be used to disrupt the activities of those individuals and criminal networks involved in Modern Slavery.

The Safer Wirral Partnership Board oversees a range of effective partnership processes to prevent and reduce criminal behaviour and protect and safeguard potential victims. Within its governance arrangements the 'Safer Wirral Hub' operates a co-located multi agency body which is able to share enforcement information and is committed to protecting the most vulnerable.

The Police Modern Slavery 'Single Point of Contact' (SPOC) is an officer embedded within the Safer Wirral Hub, as the information conduit for both Wirral partners and Merseyside's 'Operation Sanctuary' partnership team.

HOW?

Apply all appropriate tools and powers to deter, disrupt and prosecute offenders

Ensure all partners share enforcement information

Build on the success of embedding Modern Slavery prevention into the Safer Wirral Hub



RAISE AWARENESS – IMPROVE OPPORTUNITIES TO IDENTIFY VICTIMS

WHY?

It is vital that practitioners and public alike are aware of the signs and indicators of Modern Slavery so that they can respond.

Wirral will prioritise the prevention of Modern Slavery by raising awareness of the Modern Slavery agenda across all communities and increase its priority within existing networks which support and safeguard the vulnerable.

HOW?

Develop a Modern Slavery communications plan for practitioners and the public including multi agency training

Mainstream modern slavery across all areas of work

Prioritise Modern Slavery issues within existing networks which support and safeguard the vulnerable



PROTECT VULNERABLE PEOPLE FROM EXPLOITATION

WHY?

The vulnerabilities of victims are frequently re-exploited soon after the services available under the National Referral Mechanism come to an end.

In order to safeguard against repeat victimisation, the vulnerabilities particular to Modern Slavery victims needs to be understood and addressed. This understanding will come not only through new links forged with specialist support provided through the National Referral Mechanism but through existing grass roots community networks.

Early intervention and victim-focus are paramount for victims of Modern Slavery. This is well established within Wirral's crime reduction strategies, and needs to be rolled out amongst communities, partner agencies, and businesses.

HOW?

Promote links with both specialist support agencies and communities to ensure Modern Slavery survivors are given the ongoing support they require

Provide guidance to our suppliers to help them address coercive, abusive and exploitative work practices in their own business and their supply chains

Early intervention and victim-focus within communities, partners and businesses



Prepare

COORDINATE PARTNERS TO PREVENT AND REPORT MODERN SLAVERY

WHY?

In both the safeguarding of victims and enforcement activity Modern Slavery involves partner agencies working at local, regional and national levels. Wirral's response will ensure strategic and operational coordination to avoid duplication or oversight.

As Modern Slavery victims become controlled and coerced their opportunity and ability to report becomes increasingly diminished providing very few opportunities to intervene, so it is imperative we make every contact count.

Frequently it will be a Wirral community member who becomes the first point of contact with whom Modern Slavery victims can confide. Our community voluntary and faith groups are the gatekeepers for our communities. They must be as involved and engaged as their agency counterparts to fight Modern Slavery as a coordinated unit.

HOW?

Coordination at strategic and operational levels to avoid duplication or oversight

Make every contact count to safeguard vulnerable victims of Modern Slavery

Voluntary, Community and Faith groups will be engaged, and involved in the identification, referral and support of victims of Modern Slavery

A close-up photograph of a hand gripping a chain-link fence. The hand is positioned in the center-right of the frame, with fingers wrapped around the metal mesh. The background is a clear, bright blue sky. The overall image has a blue color cast.

MEASURING SUCCESS

MEASURING SUCCESS

To ensure the success of the strategy a comprehensive Wirral Modern Slavery Action Plan coordinates all activity amongst partners and communities.

This is a living document constantly updated to reflect best practise and emerging trends.

Within the Action Plan we will ensure the Strategy is underpinned by an outcomes framework that will measure the effectiveness of all actions under the core principals of the strategy.

We will evaluate the impact the impact of Wirral's Modern Slavery Action Plan through developing performance and quality measures that will be reported back to the Safer Wirral Partnership Board.

The success of this strategy will be monitored through the Safer Wirral Partnership Board

It is important that we not only judge our success on meeting targets set but also that our work is rooted in tangible outcomes improving the quality of people's lives in Wirral.

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REPORTING MODERN SLAVERY

In an emergency call:	999
To report a crime call the Police:	101
Crimestoppers (ring anonymously):	0800 500 111

For Help Guidance or to Report Modern Slavery in Wirral

Between Mon-Fri, 9:00am - 5.00pm Tel:	0151 606 2008
Outside of these hours:	0151 677 6557
Modern Slavery National Helpline:	0800 0121 700

If the identified individual has requested support contact

The Salvation Army (24/7 Support):	0300 3038 151
National Referral Mechanism - Forms and guidance:	
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms	
