

Anti-slavery campaigners and other key agencies, including the police and councils, are backing the Safe Car Wash App, launched by ***The Clewer Initiative***, the Church of England's campaign against modern slavery, and the ***Santa Marta Group***, the Catholic Church's anti-slavery project.

From tomorrow (Monday June 4) the Safe Car Wash app can be downloaded for free on to Apple and Android devices.

Users can open the app when they are at the car wash and pinpoint their exact location using GPS.

They will be then taken through a series of indicators of modern slavery. They range from practical details - such as whether workers have suitable protective clothing - to behavioural clues, such as whether they appear withdrawn. If the answers indicate a high likelihood, users will be directed to the Modern Slavery Helpline.

Data from the app will be anonymised and shared with the National Crime Agency (NCA) and the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA).

Clergy will also be asked to raise awareness of the campaign in sermons and Sunday School lessons and hold events to publicise the app.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said: "Over the last few years we have learnt more about the evil of modern slavery and we have begun to understand how it is perpetrated in our communities in plain sight.

"Through the Safe Car Wash App we now have a chance to help tackle this scourge which is damaging so many people's lives."

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, said: "I welcome this very helpful and timely initiative in an area of real exploitation. As we learn to see this example of forced labour and modern slavery in our midst, we will also become more aware of the presence of this evil scourge in other sectors in our neighbourhood."

Will Kerr, Director of Vulnerabilities for the National Crime Agency (NCA) said: "This App will help to engage the public in identifying car washes, where slavery is suspected, and will also help law enforcement identify those people who may be at risk, as well as those criminals who are exploiting the vulnerable."

Roger Bannister, interim Chief Executive for the GLAA, said: "The Safe Car Wash App is a great way of utilising the technology so many of us have become accustomed to and the GLAA are happy to be working alongside *The Clewer Initiative* and the Santa Marta Group on this important piece of work."

Kevin Hyland, Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner said: "The value of this app is that in addition to immeasurably improving the lives of victims of modern slavery being cruelly exploited in car washes today, it also empowers a community to act."

Professor Zoe Trodd, Director of the Rights Lab, a University of Nottingham Beacon of Excellence, said: “Car washes are completely unregulated territory and we don’t know how big the sector is, how many hand car washes operate or how many persons are registered to work in them. This citizen engagement in data collection is a powerful technique with potential for mapping other vulnerable services such as nail bars.”

The App is also endorsed by the National Police Chiefs’ Council, the Local Government Association and the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner.

Notes to editors

- A decade ago there were few hand car washes in the UK, but estimates now suggest that there are more than 18,000 in Britain's high streets, at the sides of motorways, and on abandoned garage forecourts.
- Many are run as legitimate businesses, but some exploit, force and threaten their workers, trapping them in modern slavery. No reliable data currently exists as to the scale of the problem, with the result that subsequent responses have proved inadequate.
- In order to help to develop a more accurate picture as to the scale of the problem Nottingham University's Rights Lab have agreed to analyse the data collected from the app over a six-month period and to report back in early 2019.
- The Clewer Initiative was launched in October with the backing of the Prime Minister Theresa May and the Archbishop of Canterbury. The three year programme is working to help the Church of England's 42 dioceses support victims of modern slavery and identify the signs of exploitation in their local communities.
- The Santa Marta Group has members in over 30 countries and brings together the heads of national and international police and law enforcement agencies along with international organisations to look at how they can work with the Church to help victims.
- The App will ask drivers to spot the possible signs of slavery including whether workers have access to suitable clothing such as gloves and boots. Where there are concerns, people are invited to call the Modern Slavery Helpline on 08000 121 700. **Do not confront anyone at the hand car wash and make sure you are in a safe place before making the call.** If someone is in immediate danger then call 999.

The indicators are:

- Do the workers have access to suitable protective clothing? Look out for gloves and boots.
- Is there evidence of workers living on site? Can you see a caravan or mattresses and bedding?
- Does anyone appear controlling or intimidating?
- Does the body language of the workers appear withdrawn or fearful?
- Do there appear to be minors working at the car wash?
- Did you pay less than £6.70 for the car wash?
- Does the car wash only accept cash?
- Did they offer a receipt?
- Did you have to pay the manager?

