



for signs of exploitation among guests in a campaign launched today

More than 1,000 posters and other materials aimed at raising awareness of the dangers of modern slavery amongst homeless people are to be distributed to night shelters across the country by The Clewer Initiative, the Church of England's response to modern slavery.

The *Let's Talk* initiative is encouraging night shelters and other outreach services such as soup kitchens to share concerns with the Modern Slavery Helpline or local support services.

The signs of modern slavery amongst homeless people could include:

- Unusual anxiety about people in positions of authority and extreme fear of being watched
- Working for no or little pay
- Working in the most common sectors for modern slavery such as construction and hand car washes
- Not being allowed to leave their place of work
- Having no control of their ID
- Being approached on the street, outside a shelter or at drop-in by someone offering work
- Signs of physical abuse or untreated injuries

The *Let's Talk* initiative includes a poster illustrating the typical journey of a homeless person trafficked into exploitation.

There are also guidance notes for project managers and volunteers in night shelters on the steps they can take to safeguard their guests from this danger. These include warning guests of the dangers of modern slavery.

The Rt Revd Dr Alastair Redfern, Chair of The Clewer Initiative, said: "Time and time again in our work around the country we meet volunteers and project leaders who have encountered modern slavery and have either not recognised it, or not known what to do about it.

"With rising numbers of homeless people on our streets, it is even more important that we are able to recognise the signs. With the *Let's Talk* resources we will equip the Church to understand what modern slavery looks like, and how they can respond to protect the vulnerable."

Dr Julia Tomas, Anti-Slavery Coordinator for The Passage said: "In our work with homeless people in London we see how homelessness affects victims of modern slavery who have escaped from their place of exploitation but have nowhere else to go.

"In its work with the vulnerable across the country, the church has a huge role to play in raising awareness of this issue, and I commend the work of The Clewer Initiative in this area."

Lys Ford from the Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) said: “The GLAA has become increasingly aware of the link between modern slavery and homelessness.

“We are convinced that by sharing more information between organisations we can find victims earlier and stop perpetrators faster. The *Let’s Talk* resources from The Clewer Initiative are a great way to get this message across and we hope those running winter night shelters will use them and take action on this issue.”

Anna Heydon, Development Worker for Imagine Norfolk Together, the joint venture between Church Urban Fund and the Diocese of Norwich, said: “Modern slavery is a clear and present danger to homeless people in Norfolk and across the country.

“Churches come into contact with so many vulnerable people and I am encouraged to see more and more people understanding how they can help protect them from modern slavery.

“The *Let’s Talk* Resources from The Clewer Initiative will help to give a clear message to guests and volunteers that though homeless people are in danger, there is support to help them.

Further information

The Clewer Initiative was launched in October 2017 with the backing of then Prime Minister Theresa May and the Archbishop of Canterbury. The initiative is helping the Church of England's 42 dioceses support victims of modern slavery and identify the signs of exploitation in their local communities.

It is important that churches have a clear understanding of how reporting modern slavery works and the role that different partners have in responding to any situation they may have discovered. The best partner to contact may depend on the circumstances of the victim or the case in question. The Clewer Initiative website has details on how to report depending on the situation.

A report from the Modern Slavery Helpline in August 2019 said that 7% of the Helpline’s modern slavery cases since their launch in October 2016 were linked to homelessness. The report is available here.

According to the Church of England’s Statistics for Mission 2017, over 2000 Church of England churches are involved in Winter Night Shelters.

A report from The Passage in 2017 reported that 64% of homelessness organisations were aware of having worked with potentially trafficked people. Report available here.