



LSAB

Making safeguarding personal

Learning Bulletin

Safeguarding Adults Review

Large-Scale Modern Slavery

Welcome to this learning bulletin.

This bulletin is designed to share the learning from a Safeguarding Adult Review following a major investigation into suspected labour exploitation by an organised crime group. The Review is about learning, not blaming, and aims to improve future practice. It should be used to help us improve how we work together with adults in Lincolnshire to safeguard and improve wellbeing.

You can read the full SAR report and executive summary here,

www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lsab

What is the review about?

In 2014, Lincolnshire Police commenced a major investigation into suspected labour exploitation by an organised crime group. The investigation was named Operation Pottery and concentrated on sixteen members of one family, Family A.

Police had been investigating the criminal activity of Family A. Family A were part of the traveller community and had exploited the mobile element of that lifestyle to recruit victims. These victims all had vulnerabilities that Family A took advantage of in order to financially exploit, manipulate or intimidate into carrying out fraudulent criminal behaviour and forced labour.

Operation Pottery involved sixty potential victims and was carried out by Police Officers working with multi-agency partners. Much of the focus was on people living on two traveller's sites in Lincolnshire.

In all, Operation Pottery lasted for two years. Of the sixty potential victims, twenty-two supported a prosecution. Of these, eighteen people were referred via the National Referral Mechanism (NMR) and all received a Conclusive Grounds decision of trafficking. The other four victims had been victims of financial exploitation. It was this group of twenty-two that were the focus of the review.

Victim's circumstances left them vulnerable to exploitation. Risk factors were:

- isolated and socially excluded,
- low self-esteem and troubled histories,
- learning disability or mental health needs,
- homelessness,
- substance and alcohol addictions,
- poverty,
- immigrants who were dependent due to language, cultural literacy or control over passport.

However many of the victims presented just under the threshold of needing the active involvement of agencies and the added protection this would afford them. This was exploited by Family A and helped their activity stay below the radar of agencies.

The review found examples of good practice where agencies worked with tenacity to overcome the barriers to disclosure and identifies exceptional multi-agency work, led by Lincolnshire Police, to bring the perpetrators to justice and the compassionate support the victims during and following the Court process.

It also highlighted weaknesses in systems that resulted in limited, poorly coordinated restorative care for many of the victims. For some of the victims, the actions taken and the support provided has transformed their lives. Others have not been so fortunate.

A huge amount of information is available within your organisation, regionally and nationally around spotting the signs of exploitation.

For guidance within your organisation please contact your safeguarding lead or team.

For more information around spotting the signs continue reading to find links to various websites.



unseen

Slavery is an umbrella term for activities involved when one person obtains or holds another person in compelled service.

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 or the threat of abuse,
- dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property',
- physically constrained or have restrictions placed on his/her freedom.

www.unseenuk.org

Our role is to protect vulnerable and exploited workers.

Through the intelligence we receive from our inspections, the public, industry and other government departments, we investigate reports of worker exploitation and illegal activity such as human trafficking, forced labour and illegal labour provision, as well as offences under the National Minimum Wage and Employment Agencies Acts.

www.gla.gov.uk



**Gangmasters &
Labour Abuse Authority**



GOV.UK

These pages provide details about the government's work to end modern slavery, including details about how to refer victims into the national referral mechanism (NRM).

www.gov.uk/government/collections/modern-slavery

The demand for cheap goods, cheap labour and cheap sex has created a breeding ground for human trafficking.

Thousands of people across the UK are being forced into a life they didn't ask for, through sexual exploitation, forced labour, domestic servitude, and forced criminality.

www.salvationarmy.org.uk/hidden-plain-sight



The Modern Slavery Helpline and Resource Centre brings us closer to the eradication of modern slavery.

It provides victims, the public, statutory agencies and businesses access to information and support on a 24/7 basis.

www.modernslaveryhelpline.org/