



**South Yorkshire
Modern Slavery
Partnership**

A Strategic Response to Modern Slavery in South Yorkshire

Strategy 2019-2021

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Introduction

According to estimations made by the Global Slavery Index, there are 136,000 people in situations of modern slavery in the UK at any one time.¹ In 2018, 6,993 potential victims of modern slavery were identified in the UK. However, we know there will be a number of victims that are not identified. However, due to the hidden nature of the crime identifying potential victims and those who exploit them is difficult and requires a collective and wide-reaching response. Under the UK Modern Slavery Act (2015) specific organisations have certain duties to address modern slavery and to safeguard potential victims, however the implementation of the Act at a regional and local level has previously been patchy and inconsistent. Through the introduction of the South Yorkshire Modern Slavery Partnership, we will strengthen our regions response to modern slavery in order to identify and support victims and prosecute those who commit modern slavery related crimes.

“Slavery is not a thing of the past but takes modern forms. This network brings partners together so that we can understand what is happening, help the victims – who are often intimidated and afraid – and prosecute the offenders. Above all we need to rescue people from the appalling lives they lead once they are caught up in these different forms of modern slavery.

“But there is a role for all of us to be alert and be willing to tell the authorities if we suspect something that seems wrong. Employers have a responsibility to ask questions about the firms they deal with. We all have a responsibility to think about the services we access and who is working there.”

Said Dr Alan Billings, South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner.

What is Modern Slavery?

The expression ‘modern slavery’ is an umbrella term for activities involved when a person(s) obtains or holds other person(s) in compelled service; it includes, slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking. Often victims of modern slavery experience a number of abuses and are exploited for various ‘purposes’ these include but are not limited to:

- **Sexual exploitation** – this includes sexual abuse, forced prostitution and forms of child sexual exploitation.
- **Labour exploitation** – victims are forced to work long hours for little or no pay in various industries including, but not limited to, construction, agriculture, hospitality, waste management and fishing.
- **Forced criminality** – victims are compelled to commit crimes to benefit other persons e.g. shoplifting, cannabis cultivation, fraud.
- **Domestic servitude** – victims live and work in their ‘employers’ household and are forced to work long hours undertaking a variety of domestic tasks for very little or no pay. This is one of the most difficult forms of exploitation to uncover due to its hidden nature.
- **Organ harvesting** – the surgical removal of parts of the body, sold for huge profits. Whilst it is rare in the UK, it still happens.

It is important to consider that an individual may experience multiple forms of exploitation and/or abuse.

¹ <https://www.globallslaveryindex.org/2018/data/country-data/united-kingdom/>

Modern slavery can happen to people of all backgrounds, faiths, genders and nationalities, although there are several factors which could make a person more at-risk. Equally, there is no one perpetrator of modern slavery, but we know those who exploit others abuse a position of power or trust.

UK Modern Slavery Act 2015

The introduction of the UK Modern Slavery Act in 2015 brought about a number of changes to drive the national response to modern slavery.² The introduction of the Act:

- Consolidated existing offenses and provided new legal definitions for Slavery, Servitude, Forced or Compulsory Labour; Human Trafficking and Meaning of Exploitation.
- Provides the opportunity for 'suitably' severe sentences for modern slavery crimes.
- Enhanced the court's ability to put restrictions on individuals where it's necessary to protect people from the harm caused by modern slavery offences.
- Introduced a statutory defence for victims of slavery and trafficking where they have been forced to commit crimes as part of their exploitation.
- Placed a duty on the secretary of state to produce statutory guidance on victim identification and victim services.
- Made provision for independent child trafficking advocates – not widely rolled out.
- Provides the opportunity for courts to compensate victims where assets are confiscated from perpetrators.
- Requires businesses with a turnover more than £36m to report annually on what action they are taking to address modern slavery in their business and supply chains.

The National Referral Mechanism

- Introduced in 2009 to identify and provide support to potential victims of modern slavery.
- It is a two-stage decision process:
 - Reasonable Grounds Decision (RG) – within 5 days of referral
 - Conclusive Grounds Decision (CG) – after 45 days.
- There is one decision maker the 'Single Competent Authority' which sits within the Home Office.
- Support is provided by the Salvation Army and its subcontractors. Ashiana and City Hearts are the two subcontractors in South Yorkshire.
- Referrals to the NRM are made by First Responders and informed consent must be sought from adult victims.
- The NRM does not negate safeguarding responsibilities.

² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/30/contents/enacted>

The South Yorkshire Modern Slavery Partnership Approach

A diverse region, South Yorkshire has a population of 1,402,918 and includes the four metropolitan boroughs: Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield. The region is covered by one police force, the South Yorkshire Police, which is overseen by the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner.

In 2018, 99 potential victims of modern slavery were identified in South Yorkshire and were referred to the government for support within the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). However, due to the complex and hidden nature of modern slavery, we know the actual number of victims is much higher. In response, a group of organisations who work directly with victims of modern slavery – Ashiana, City Hearts, the Snowdrop Project and The South Yorkshire Police – unified to bring together various organisations which may encounter victims and/or perpetrators. After three years of consultation, this developed into the South Yorkshire Modern Slavery Partnership (SYMSP), a regional multi-agency group which offers a strategic joined-up approach to address modern slavery in the region. The Partnership is funded by the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner, as the Commissioner recognises modern slavery and human trafficking as a priority, as outlined in his strategic plan.

SYMSP recognise that several services and organisations may encounter potential victims of modern slavery or those who exploit them. Therefore, we are working with our partners to ensure Professionals have the knowledge and capacity to spot the signs of modern slavery and the understanding to report potential incidents to ensure potential victims can receive the support they need.

“By working in Partnership, we can work more effectively to ensure organisations have the knowledge and resources to identify and protect potential victims, whilst also holding those accountable who commit this crime.”

Bill Hotchkiss, South Yorkshire Modern Slavery Partnership Chair

Our Vision

For South Yorkshire to be a place free from slavery.

Our Mission

To work in partnership to ensure South Yorkshire is a place of safety for survivors, a hostile region for those who exploit others and a leading influence on national priorities relating to modern slavery and human trafficking.

Our Priorities

PREPARE: Improve partnership working across South Yorkshire

PREVENT: Increase awareness of modern slavery and human trafficking

PROTECT: Improve identification and enhanced support for survivors

PURSUE: Increase detection and prosecution of perpetrators

Governance

The South Yorkshire Modern Slavery Partnership brings together a number of statutory and non-statutory partners from across the region. Each organisation has a different role to play from identifying potential victims, providing them with the support they need or holding those who exploit others to account. Some organisations within the partnership have particular obligations under the Modern Slavery Act and we recognise the importance of working in partnership to ensure national policies are implemented at a regional and local level.

The Partnership also has close links to:

- The County Wide Community Safety Partnership
- Local Authority Community Safety Partnerships
- Modern Slavery Practitioners Group

Steering Group

The Partnership was established by Ashiana, City Hearts, Snowdrop Project, South Yorkshire Police and is funded by the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner. These organisations form the Steering Group which meets regularly to ensure the Partnership is achieving its objectives and outcomes.

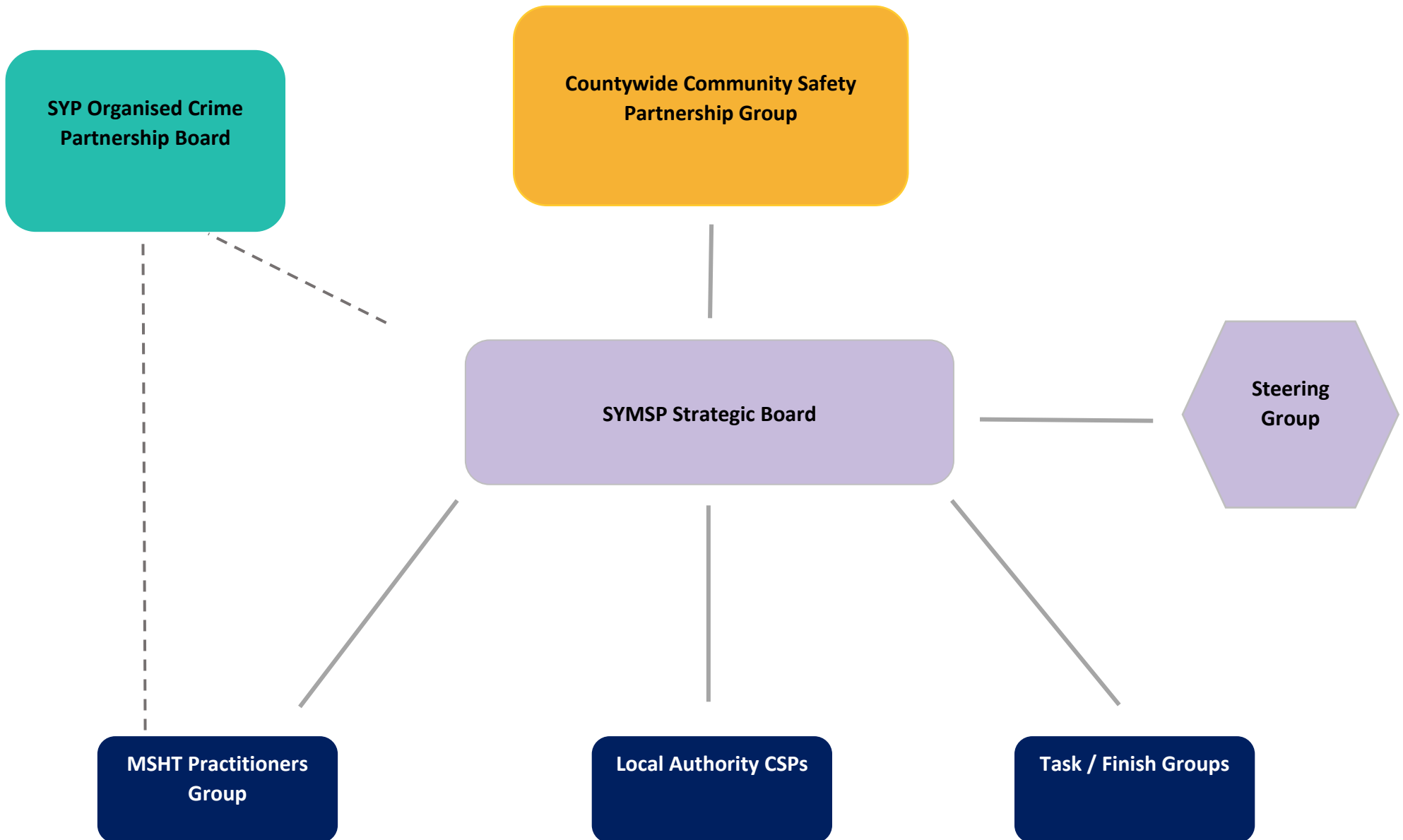
Partners

Partners meet on a voluntary basis and have an agreed Terms of Reference which they abide by.

- PCC for South Yorkshire
- South Yorkshire Police
- Ashiana
- City Hearts
- Snowdrop Project
- Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
- Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
- Sheffield City Council
- NHS
- Gangmasters Labour & Abuse Authority
- National Crime Agency
- Home Office
- Clewer Initiative
- Department for Work & Pensions
- Sheffield Hallam University
- Victim Support
- Staffline
- Anti-Trafficking and Labour Exploitation Unit (ATLEU)
- British Red Cross
- Refugee Council



Governance Structure



Implementation

PREPARE

Improve partnership working across South Yorkshire

Modern slavery is a pervasive crime. Those who exploit others use wide ranging tactics to abuse their victims. Because of this, victims and their exploiters may come into contact with a range of services, providing the opportunity for organisations to collaborate to tackle modern slavery. Furthermore, different agencies in the region have varying responsibilities, knowledge and capacity. Only through working together can services in South Yorkshire which are more likely to encounter a potential victim or exploiter work effectively to prevent, disrupt and respond to situations of modern slavery.



Objective 1

To improve information sharing and good practice between relevant organisations.

Outcomes

- Develop reporting and information sharing protocol between partners.
- Relationships between professionals working to respond to MSHT are formalised and clear.



Objective 2

Ensure all organisations with a responsibility under the Modern Slavery Act have the required governance and oversight.

Outcomes

- Modern slavery features as a priority on all partners agendas.
- Frontline professionals can escalate and address challenges relating to modern slavery at a strategic level.
- Safeguarding is embedded within the Partnership.



Objective 3

Improved understanding of roles and responsibilities of partner organisations.

Outcomes

- Resources are developed to promote the different roles and responsibilities of organisations in South Yorkshire.
- An increase in appropriate MSHT referrals are made to partner organisations.
- Reduction in confusion about support services which support victims in South Yorkshire.

PREVENT

Increase awareness of modern slavery and human trafficking

Due to the complexity of modern slavery and human trafficking (MSHT) we will work to equip frontline professionals, those working in the community and the public across the region with the knowledge and confidence to spot the signs of MSHT, and to respond appropriately.



Objective 4

Increase the knowledge of frontline professionals on what modern slavery is and their responsibilities to safeguard victims

Outcomes

- Training is delivered to professionals in high risk roles, identified by partner organisations.
- Training and awareness raising materials endorsed by the Partners are made accessible.
- Increase awareness amongst frontline staff of MSHT leading to increased confidence in its identification.



Objective 5

Deliver targeted evidence-led awareness raising campaigns

Outcomes

- High risk sectors and communities are mapped across South Yorkshire.
- Increased community awareness and resilience through partnership awareness raising campaigns and events.
- Increased reporting of incidents from previously underrepresented areas.



Objective 6

Deliver a range of messages across the region to increase awareness and understanding of local issues.

Outcomes

- The Partnership delivers a number of messages across a range of platforms including social media.
- A range of speaking opportunities are identified by the Partnership which works with Partners to deliver appropriate training.
- The Partnership engages with local media to increase awareness.

PROTECT

Improve identification and enhanced support for survivors

South Yorkshire is a unique region due to the concentration of modern slavery support services, however, it is widely acknowledged that there is a lack of understanding around what support is available for victims of modern slavery both nationally and locally. Therefore, the South Yorkshire Modern Slavery Partnership aims to ensure organisations in the region are working together to ensure potential victims receive the support they need to move on from their exploitation and to reduce their risk of re-exploitation.



Objective 7

Ensure instances of MSHT are reported correctly and victims are safeguarded in an appropriate manner.

Outcomes

- Map a multi-agency pathway for reporting and responding to modern slavery concerns.
- Specific Points of Contact in partner organisations are established and well trained.
- The number and quality of NRM referrals from First Responders improve.



Objective 8

Improve a survivor's journey from identification through to support.

Outcomes

- A victim support pathway is developed for the four local authorities
- Survivors are empowered to inform the Partnership's understanding of support.
- Alternative routes of support are available for those who do not want to enter the NRM.



Objective 9

Factors which make survivors vulnerable to re-exploitation are reduced.

Outcomes

- A clear understanding of what risk-factors make a survivor vulnerable to re-exploitation is established.
- Once risk-factors are understood, the Partnership works to reduce those factors.

PURSUE

Increase detection and prosecution of perpetrators

The introduction of the Modern Slavery Act consolidated previous offences to simplify legislation surrounding modern slavery and increase the sentences for criminals who exploit others. There are a number of barriers which make prosecuting those who exploit others extremely difficult and to date there has not been a conviction for modern slavery in South Yorkshire. Through working together to share intelligence, the Partnership aims to build the capacity of enforcement agencies to disrupt, discourage and detain those who exploit others.



Objective 10

Deliver multi-agency and intelligence led operations to disrupt MS activity.

Outcomes

- A clear intelligence picture of MSHT across SY is established.
- The number of successful operations increase.
- Appropriate support is in place for potential victims identified during disruption activity.



Objective 11

Improve the practical and emotional support available to victims throughout the justice process.

Outcomes

- Barriers to prosecution are understood.
- Appropriate and effective victim support is available.
- Increase in victims working with police to give evidence.



Objective 12

Develop innovative approaches to disrupting criminal activity relating to MSHT.

Outcomes

- The membership of the Practitioners Group is broadened to include other enforcement agencies.
- The Partnership learns from the work of other forces.
- Increase in Slavery and Trafficking Prevention and Risk Orders.



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