

United Kingdom

Metropolitan Police

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) continues to work closely in London with the Diocese of Westminster's Bakhita House project and Caritas to progress the aims of the Santa Marta Group.

We have continued to see an increase in modern slavery cases referred to us. In 2015 there were just 270 referrals. Last year this rose to 1013 and already passed 1300 by October of 2017.

The Modern Slavery & Kidnap Unit oversee the response to allegations of modern slavery and ensure appropriate action is taken. Despite the rise in referrals, arrests for modern slavery remain consistent with 88 in 2016 & 77 up to the end of September 2017.

We achieve the greatest success in terms of prosecution result from those cases reported directly to Police or as a result of intelligence, particularly those received from international colleagues.

In the last financial year (16/17) we successfully prosecuted 33 cases (75%) offences under the Modern Slavery Act. This year is continuing at a similar rate of convictions with 22 successful prosecutions to September.

There remain a number of inhibitors making a victim reluctant to support a prosecution. These include an unwillingness to give evidence, concern about their family finding out (particularly in sex exploitation) & concerns for the safety of loved ones in their country of origin.

The MPS has embarked on a number of activity days where we have worked with partner agencies & NGOs to identify victims of sexual exploitation in brothels and in October 2017 we completed a series of visits to car washes with Her Majesties Revenue and Customs (HMRC) & Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority. Although there were no allegations of slavery, workers were being exploited.

Earlier this year we supported the Home Office in organising an international conference involving government & law enforcement partners from Poland & Lithuania. The event was part of an initiative to formalise bilateral agreements to help combat modern slavery including the raising of awareness within vulnerable communities.

In September Commissioner Cressida Dick lent her voice to support a campaign being run by the London Evening Standard Newspaper to encourage the public to be aware of modern

slavery in their communities and to raise concerns with the authorities so that it can be effectively tackled.

We are also working closely with the London Mayor's Officer for Policing and Crime as part of their Modern Slavery Partnership Board which supports a multi-agency strategy to tackle Modern Slavery across London.