

# Update from Surrey Police Chief Constable Nick Ephgrave



July 2017

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*In previous bulletins I have spoken about the changing nature of crime, and how many crimes, which I refer to as hidden crimes, are not always easy for the public to see. This month, I would like to focus on one such crime, modern slavery, a crime that is hidden in plain sight.*

*Modern slavery can take many forms including the trafficking of people for a range of purposes, forced labour and servitude. Whilst there may be a perception that modern slavery doesn't happen in Surrey, it is both shocking and surprising to know we have had 53 reports over the course of the last year (June 16-May 17).*

*Chief Constable Nick Ephgrave*



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## Working together to tackle modern slavery

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The following example is a real case from Surrey that I would like to share with you, which I feel reaffirms the importance of us sharing information and working together.

Two Bangladeshi sisters, aged 11 and 14 came to the UK for a better life and good education. They lived with their cousin, his pregnant wife and their three children, in a two-bedroomed flat in the east of the county, initially sleeping on the floor.

The sisters were expected to do all the cooking, cleaning and childcare including taking the children to school and putting them to bed. If the girls didn't "work" they faced the threat of not being fed. They were also threatened with violence, and the 14-year-old was sexually assaulted by her cousin. If they didn't comply, the girls were threatened with being sent back to Bangladesh to get married.

After four years, the girls found the courage to talk to us and based on their story were placed with a foster carer. Their cousin and his wife were charged with a number of offences including sexual assault, child cruelty and forced labour.

The case was brought before the court where the defendants were acquitted. However, the point to emphasise is that there were a number of occasions when the signs of modern slavery could have been spotted but weren't, and we need your help to ensure all of our staff and organisations understand their responsibility to be looking beyond how things may appear on the surface.

These girls attended schools, visited GPs, had relationships with social services and eventually the police. Had the signs been noticed earlier, and the dots joined between all of our services we could have rescued and protected these girls much sooner.

### Spot the signs

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Modern slavery can be hard to spot, but there are a number of warning signs to look out for which include:

- Victims showing physical signs of abuse, appearing malnourished or unkempt
- Victims being under the control or influence of others, rarely interacting with the neighbourhood
- Victims with no identification, few personal possessions or clothes
- Victims who avoid eye contact, appear frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers.

Please encourage your staff and communities to report their concerns about potential victims of modern slavery. Reports can be submitted via our [report online](#) function or over the phone by calling us on 101 or 999 in an emergency.

## Operational updates

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Here are just a few of our operational updates:

- A man has been jailed for seventeen years after pleading guilty to 24 counts of rape and sexual assault at Kingston Crown Court on 6 July. The offences, which were committed between 2010 and 2011, involved the man committing the sexual acts when the victim was asleep or otherwise unconscious and filming them on his phone. Towards the end of 2011 he began uploading the footage onto various pornographic websites and footage was found online in 2015 by a family member.
- A man from Ash Vale has been sentenced to 12 years in prison after he spent nearly ten years paying to watch children be sexually abused live online. He pleaded guilty in March this year to 12 counts of arranging or facilitating the commission of a child sex offence, and 5 counts of making indecent images of children.
- Two men appeared in court in connection with break-ins at Best One on Shepperton Road, Laleham and Co-op on Guildford Road in Lightwater on Tuesday, 18 July. A 35-year-old from Hillingdon pleaded guilty to two non-dwelling burglaries (relating to the Laleham and Lightwater burglaries), driving without insurance and dangerous driving. He pleaded not guilty to taking a vehicle without consent, two other dwelling burglaries and driving while disqualified. Another man, 27-years-old, of no fixed address plead guilty to the following charges – two dwelling burglaries, two non-dwelling burglaries and being carried in a vehicle taken without consent and possession of a class A drug, namely crack cocaine. Both have been remanded.
- A man has been imprisoned for six years after pleading guilty to kidnap and false imprisonment following an incident in Ashford in January 2016. Five other men had already been convicted and sentenced in relation to this incident.
- Detectives from Counter Terrorism Policing South East have charged a teenager from Redhill with terrorism offences. The 17-year-old male was charged with three counts of disseminating terrorist publications contrary to Section 2 of the Terrorism Act and one count of preparation of terrorism acts contrary to Section 5 of the Terrorism Act. He is due to appear at the Old Bailey on 11 August.
- At Guildford Magistrates Court on 10 July, Surrey Police made a successful application for a Partial Closure Order on a property in Wardle Close, Bagshot for a period of three months. The vulnerable gentleman that lived in the property was being taken advantage of by men who used his house to take drugs and drink alcohol. Further ongoing intervention is now being put in place with the housing association who are looking at the gentleman's housing needs and in the short term support workers will be working with him to allow him to live safely and without fear.



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