



LEAP

LIVED EXPERIENCE
ADVISORY PANEL



ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2022 - JULY 2023

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A LETTER TO THE SECTOR

from a Survivor who Felt Exhausted

Dear Sector,

Please can I gently remind you of the following:

Do not speak for survivors, speak to us and help amplify our voices.

Do not invite us to 'be involved' to showcase us, instead create a room where we can lead you.

Do not use your fancy labels to describe us, instead try and understand our language.

Do not place limitations on us, create opportunities for us to excel.

Do not glorify having survivors on board, if you will not navigate in our direction.

Do not ask us to share our experiences if you are not willing to learn from them.

Do not play the saviour and rescue us, instead walk with us to find our journey of freedom.

Do not write our suggestions down to fill paper, instead implement them.

Can we now please try & work together to fight for change?

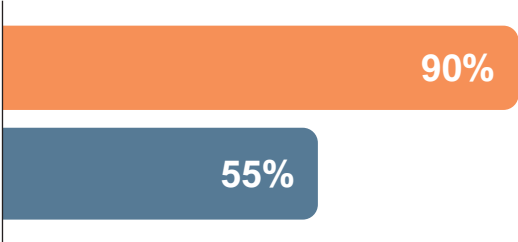
Alicia, LEAP Consultant

INTRODUCTION

Launched in April 2022, the Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP) grew out of a three month ‘Train the Trainer’ project with the Human Trafficking Foundation (HTF), financially supported by The Home Office’s Prevention Fund. Within this project consultants with lived experience of modern slavery attended training sessions delivered by HTF, Love Public Speaking and the Hummingbird Project to build confidence to design their own modern slavery training. Consultants then went on to deliver their own training on modern slavery to local authorities, police and community groups across London with the mission to bring lived experiences into learning to help improve understanding, attitudes and services available.

The professionals who attended the training not only learnt about modern slavery legislation and the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) process, but also how to improve the interaction and support they offer individuals, which will have a positive impact on the victims and survivors they work with in the future.

The lived experience consultants honed skills in public speaking, safe boundary setting and increased their technical knowledge of the UK’s modern slavery systems and framework and the role of agencies in tackling this crime, gaining transferable skills and confidence to use in a professional capacity.



After the training 90% of attendees felt confident in their ability to identify individuals at risk of modern slavery compared to 55% before the training.¹

¹ Lived Experience Train the Trainer Report, 2022



Following the success of the training project, consultants established themselves as the Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP) to ensure the work of the sector is shaped by people who understand where reform is needed in the systems they have personally navigated and the services they have engaged with. LEAP developed a payment structure and an Expression of Interest form, to gather the information the consultants need to know before deciding whether to take on a piece of work. An expansive range of organisations have since commissioned LEAP through HTF to deliver training, consultation on policy, research and guidance to improve the response of statutory agencies, NGOs and other relevant bodies to survivors of modern slavery.



“When I first co-created LEAP with HTF and the other members I was painfully shy. I often even refused to speak within the group setting due to this, but as we progressed and got to know one another my confidence began to grow. I’m now confident in my ability to speak on statutory issues and on issues I’m passionate about outside of my LEAP group. One of my favourite projects was the MSOIC investigative guide. We had an active part in participating with professionals working with survivors, deciding how victims should be treated and what support they should receive – this was very proactive and needed. I’ve learnt that as survivors we’re always looked down on for not having the academic title or professional title, but we offer much more: we offer lived experience. Pain into power and words into wisdom.”

LEAP Consultant

PRINCIPLES OF LIVED EXPERIENCE ENGAGEMENT

LEAP’s work is guided by the following three principles of lived experience engagement²:

1 Survivors are more than their experiences

The disclosure of personal experiences will never be required during co-working engagements. Those with lived experiences are valued as experts and equal partners in anti-trafficking work.

2 Engaging lived experience experts as partners requires meaningful consideration

The input from lived experience experts must be thought through and essential to the project’s outcomes to ensure that this is never a tick-box exercise. At the forefront of meaningful engagement is ensuring that a survivor receives more than remuneration for their contributions.

3 Supporting partnerships with survivors requires commitment and investments of resources

In all engagements individuals with lived experience must be remunerated for their time. Co-working is not a one-off exercise, but instead is a culture shift to a way of working that centres expertise from survivors.



² Adapted from Principles of Survivor Engagement in the Anti-Trafficking Field, Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice

CO-WORKING IN THE ANTI-TRAFFICKING SECTOR

Survivors must be at the forefront of anti-trafficking to develop the policies and processes that shaped their experiences of support during their recovery. Encouraging a culture of co-working and sustainable involvement in national influencing ensures that those making decisions better reflect the communities they are working to support. Co-working, where both learned and lived experience are valued equally, leads to the sector's ability to better understand the needs of survivors and build solutions to address gaps in support.

For the Human Trafficking Foundation, co-working with LEAP has meant that the organisation has a deeper understanding of the realities of services, what policy changes mean in practice, more mindful, trauma-informed ways of working and enables the organisation to continue to share the learnings across all agencies HTF partners with.



“Why would you try to change a system without working with people who have experience of navigating it? Survivor informed organisations are better equipped to create a safe environment and identify opportunities to implement effective solutions. Co-working between lived and learnt experience enables us all to be drivers of change.”

HTF member of staff



LEAP'S WORK

JULY 2022 – JULY 2023



ORGANISATIONS LEAP WORKED WITH

JULY 2022 – JULY 2023

(Consultants also worked with additional organisations independently from LEAP)

ORGANISATIONS LEAP HAS WORKED WITH:



LEAP IN NUMBERS



TRAINING

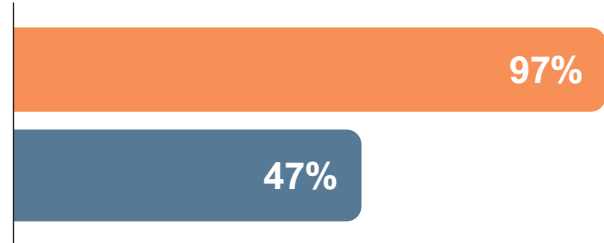
Multi-Agency Training

In February 2023 LEAP developed a unique, specialist modern slavery training series, designed to focus on topics they consider most important for professionals to know. The training series explored the following subject areas:

- A Relational Response to Child Exploitation
- Cultural Humility in Focus: Responding to Child Sexual Exploitation in Asian Communities
- Best Practice in Supporting Adult Survivors
- Child Criminal Exploitation & County Lines

This training series was funded by the Mayor's Office for Police & Crime (MOPAC) open to NHS, local authorities, community groups and law enforcement in London and was booked up within days of first advertising with a total of 348 individual sign ups.

Within these sessions, consultants shared reflections on their experiences with services and offered insights into the ways in which agencies' responses to modern slavery could be strengthened to better meet the needs of survivors. Attendees were given the opportunity to ask the consultant honest, open questions around what best practice looks like and left feeling motivated and better equipped to respond to modern slavery and survivors, which was clearly illustrated within the feedback from the training series.



Post training, 97% of attendees said they felt confident in their ability to support survivors of modern slavery in their work, compared to only 47% before training.

After the training, attendees were asked 'What will you do differently as a result of this training?' The responses were extensive and varied, highlighting the range of the panel's advice on how to support survivors of modern slavery that they were able to expertly convey to their audience. LEAP consultants reflected that this commitment to change ways of working was the most important feedback they received. Training attendees' answers included:

“I think the message of consistency was the strongest thing I took away- being a consistent person for the young person.”

“Better safe place to talk and not labelling and being aware of the inconsistencies of the impact of the trauma and be mindful of the trauma and not continuously have them repeat.”

“I will have a more open view when dealing with alleged perpetrators as to why they are involved in the crime.”

“Stop focusing on structure of appointments and just focus on listening, checking in and being a consistent in the young people’s lives.”

“Approach survivors of trafficking with compassion, and listen to them without judgement. I will think about the individual and their needs, ask relevant but appropriate questions that will not further traumatize or victimize survivors.”

“Look into the support options available for whole family when a victim has been identified - focus on a holistic approach.”

“Make sure that we are not retraumatizing the survivor by making them repeat and relive the experiences with new professionals all the time.”



TRAINING FOR Law Enforcement

In conjunction with the Metropolitan Police Central Modern Slavery and Child Exploitation training team, two LEAP consultants, in conversation with the Human Trafficking Foundation, delivered a two-hour training session to 50 officers from the Metropolitan police at City Hall. Consultants shared insight into how to build trust and rapport with victims, considerations for police officers around cultural humility and understanding, and their experiences both negative and positive with law enforcement. This session was also an opportunity for police officers to share challenges, reflect on how they interact with victims of modern slavery and ask LEAP consultants questions on how to best improve practice in supporting survivors.

The impact of the training sessions on the police officers who attended can be measured through the feedback shared with HTF:

“It would be fantastic if this kind of session could be delivered as part of initial police officer training I’m sure it would leave a lasting impression.”

“It helped me understand victim perspectives much better. Overall takeaway was that we need to be more ‘human’ in our policing responses.”

“It was very useful to understand the moments survivors felt were critical and where failings could have been avoided.”

“The input from the two speakers was amazing and with working on the intelligence side and not being an operational police officer, it was good to hear that from them as I only see the NRM forms & intelligence not the actual people.”

“We can learn so much from people like them to improve our care and services in relation to people who have been exploited.”

“This was an incredible insight, and it is probably one of the most interesting and useful events I have attended. The messages from survivors are key, and it'd be really useful to embed this type of event as part of core training.”

Much of the feedback relayed the demand for further training delivered by those with lived experience of modern slavery, and for sessions such as this to be a mandatory part of police training to better understand the needs of those they support through police work.

TRAINING FOR Councils and Anti-Trafficking Organisations

LEAP consultants were also commissioned by Hackney Council, Crisis, Southwark Council and Porchlight to create bespoke training opportunities for staff on a range of topics. This training equipped staff with the knowledge and tools required to better identify survivors of modern slavery and establish pathways to services and sustained support to aid recovery.

TRAINING FOR At-risk Young People

One LEAP consultant designed and delivered workshops on grooming, child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE) to youth groups at Manor Gardens Welfare Trust. These workshops were designed to enable young people to identify risks for themselves and their peers and feel empowered with the knowledge of where to seek help if someone they know is being exploited. Throughout the workshops, the young people in the youth groups felt confident to ask the LEAP consultant insightful questions and safely make disclosures about risks of exploitation they may have witnessed or experienced. The impact of this work in preventing exploitation, grooming and mate crime is clear and the young people in the workshops left better equipped to address trafficking risks.



IMPROVING SURVIVOR SUPPORT

Birmingham City Council

Birmingham City Council and the Violence Reduction Unit commissioned LEAP to undertake a consultation on their Pre-NRM Casework Toolkit and develop meaningful recommendations to improve casework responses to survivors of modern slavery ahead of relaunching the Toolkit.

As part of the consultation, the Human Trafficking Foundation produced a report detailing LEAP's extensive guidance on how to improve the toolkit, which included in-depth scrutiny of the language and content to ensure that the document was a useful tool for strengthening the bond between individual and caseworker in initial meetings and encouraged the individual to take ownership of the next steps in their recovery journey. LEAP also considered the structure, branding and accessibility of the toolkit and offered advice on how to avoid overwhelming or disengagement of an individual during pre-NRM meetings.

The Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime Unit

The Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime Unit commissioned LEAP to review the victims section of the guidance for Investigative Opportunities for Offences Under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. As a result of the consultation with LEAP, the national guidance for all UK law enforcement for investigating modern slavery cases was updated to reflect their input.

The document now includes guidance for officers supporting survivors with children, best practice advice for officers as survivors navigate criminal proceedings and trial considerations and how officers can equip survivors with the information they need before entering the NRM. This work was recognised by Minister for Safeguarding, Sarah Dines in a Westminster Hall Debate on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery³.



'To capture the voices and learning from survivors of modern slavery crimes I was delighted to hear that the Lived Experience Advisory Panel were able to take time to share their experiences and expertise with our unit. The information and insights they have shared and provided the unit is invaluable to our work.'

**Detective Superintendent
Tamasine Matthews, Unit Head,
Modern Slavery Organised
Immigration Crime Unit**



³ Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery Volume 730: debated on Wednesday 29 March 2023; Column 306WH

SHAPING MODERN SLAVERY RESEARCH

LEAP consultants have contributed to the modern slavery research agenda, working with a range of academic institutions from the University of Nottingham Rights Lab to the British and International Institute of Comparative Law on areas of research such as the links between cognitive impairment and modern slavery and the identification of adult survivors and entry into the NRM. LEAP also contributed to the sector wide consultation on the development of the Independent Modern Slavery Advocate (IMSA) model and played a significant role in shaping the Human Trafficking Foundation's research into how the domestic abuse sector's Whole Housing Approach could be replicated in the modern slavery response, identifying the injustices and gaps in provision faced by many survivors when trying to secure safe and appropriate accommodation that supports their recovery needs.⁴

One LEAP consultant also provided a critical lens to an investigation on the current support provision for Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), highlighting the gaps where risks for young people are missed and identifying that the critical cornerstone for all support for CCE affected young people is consistency.⁵



INFLUENCING POLICY

Legislative change must involve people with experience of the crime the legislation is seeking to address, and over the last year LEAP have continued to seek out opportunities to advocate for systematic change to the support that survivors of modern slavery receive.

LEAP both submitted written evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee inquiry into human trafficking and provided oral evidence to the Committee providing advice on survivor recovery, how to incorporate a trauma-informed response to modern slavery.⁶

LEAP also sent an open letter to the Prime Minister highlighting their concerns on the impact of the Illegal Migration Act on survivors of modern slavery. This letter, signed by other leading survivor advocates and groups in the UK, garnered media attention and was highlighted in an article by the Evening Standard.⁷

“I really enjoy being part of leap and grateful for the opportunities they offer to ensure survivor voices are embedded”

LEAP Consultant

⁴ [The Key Issue: Housing for Survivors of Modern Slavery](#)

⁵ [Child Criminal Exploitation and The Need for Consistency](#)

⁶ [LEAP's Written Evidence for the Home Affairs Committee](#)

⁷ [Evening Standard Article on the Impact of the Illegal Migration Bill](#)



**LOOKING
AHEAD
TO JULY 2023
– JULY 2024**

The work of LEAP continues to evolve and expand in its reach across the UK. Already the next year will see LEAP supporting Hope at Home in their development of a support model for guests within their modern slavery hosting scheme, advising Birmingham City Council on their training materials, and speaking at events for Anti-Slavery International and the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Alongside these commissioned projects, supporting organisations to better respond to the needs of survivors of modern slavery, LEAP will be looking to build and develop on their priorities for the sector which include the development of a self-identifying tool for survivors in initial interactions with professionals and working to support parents of CCE and CSE affected young people. The next year will see LEAP continuing to be at the forefront, moving past survivor input and instead embedding long-term engagement so that lived experience experts are part of a systemic change in the way the anti-slavery sector works.

“I would say LEAP has helped me grow mentally and help me find a purpose when I felt lost. Being on this journey and having support from HTF has helped me grow and find support I needed to push forward. Since working with LEAP, I’ve been able to achieve change I never thought possible for me, and from the background I’ve come from. I’m now able to go to university, which I thought would never be achievable to me. I can challenge a system that I never thought would listen. It’s been a life-changing experience for me. I want LEAP to drive systemic change.”

LEAP Consultant



LEAP

LIVED EXPERIENCE
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Human

Trafficking

Foundation