

ANNUAL REPORT

The Together Free Foundation

For the year ending 31 December 2021



Charitable Status

The Together Free Foundation (TFF) is a registered charity in England. Charity Number 1185728

Registered Address:
6 Clarence Road
Southend-on-Sea
Essex
SS11AN

Trustees Serving During 2021

Peter Dominey - Ongoing

Dan Pratt - Ongoing

Diane Watts - Ongoing

Jackie Raja
Appointed June 2021

Nick Lear
Retired June 2021

The charity is established by means of a constitution with trustees appointed by the trustee body.

Summary of Objectives and Activities

The Together Free Foundation (TFF) helps local communities, faith groups and charities end modern slavery and human trafficking (MSHT). This is done through supporting and catalysing local communities and voluntary sector organisations to find local solutions for local problems of exploitation. Building the capacity of small voluntary and community organisations and providing them with the necessary support, information and services to enable them respond to local forms of MSHT. These objectives are achieved through: 1) developing national and local partnership engagement; 2) stimulating local responses through localised antislavery partnerships; 3) raising awareness and training, and; 4) safeguarding and supporting victims and survivors of modern slavery. Employing the equivalent of 1.5 employees, the charity offers excellent value for money for its output due to mobilising community and volunteer responses.

Public Benefit Statement

The charity's trustees continue to have regard for both the charitable objects set out in the governing document and to ensuring that the activities of the charity, as described, meet the public benefit test. In so doing, they take account of the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when planning the charity's programme of activities. The trustees of the Together Free Foundation are confident that the activities of the charity demonstrate strong evidence of public benefit.

Strong Progress During the Pandemic

Although 2021 continued to be challenging for TFF, there has been strong progress and adaptability. Reduced opportunities for face to face partnership engagement, training and awareness raising resulted in increased online training and engagement through video conferencing and social media.

One of TTF's employees was furloughed for 25% for 9 months of 2021. Although 2021 has been a challenging year, TTF has adapted, expanded current initiatives and pursued new opportunities relating to this vital work.

◆ Partnership Development

The Together Free Foundation works in partnership in order to maximise impact. It draws on its national networks to stimulate localised responses to MSHT. During 2021 this included:

- Initiating and leading the research project exploring *Slavery-Free Communities: Practical and Theological Responses to Modern Slavery*. Undertaken in partnership with Regent's Park College: Oxford University, The Salvation Army, The Clewer Initiative, BMS World Mission, Rene Cassin and The Baptist Union of Great Britain.
- Three articles written for Reform Magazine, SCM Press and the Baptist Union of Great Britain's social media channels. One podcast for four church denominations.
- Participation in The Human Trafficking Foundation's National Network of Co-ordinator's Forum.
- Facilitating the continued development of the Southend Against Modern Slavery Partnership
- Encouraging the emergence of antislavery initiatives within the county of Essex.



The research project 'Slavery-Free Communities' was initiated and led by Together Free. It explores faith and community responses to modern slavery. The 302 page book was published by SCM Press and includes contributions from Rt Hon Theresa May, The Most Revd Justin Welby as well as leading theologians and human rights practitioners.

"This collection of thoughtful and informative contributions powerfully make the case for the role of faith communities in our work to eradicate slavery and trafficking. It anchors this work in holy text, provides inspiring examples of what can be done and listens with compassion to the voices of survivors. This book will move you to action and prayer for those who are oppressed by the greatest human rights abuse of our time."

Dame Sarah Thornton, Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, UK



SAMS Partnership in Numbers, 2021

25 Partner Organisations

Six community leaders on Steering Group

Two awareness raising campaigns

Three specialist training packages developed for housing providers, healthcare providers and charities

21 workshops delivered

595 front-line professionals and volunteers trained

10 policies developed and updated

Survivor Care Project initiated and set-up

Five survivors of modern slavery supported

9 Volunteers trained as mentors, befrienders and practical helpers

57 hours of support given to survivors within first 3 months of the project

◆ Stimulating local responses through localised antislavery partnerships

The *Southend Against Modern Slavery (SAMS) Partnership* grew from the Together Free Foundation and continues to be held within the charity. SAMS Partnership formed the major piece of work undertaken by TFF within 2021. During 2021 activities included:

Organising and facilitating quarterly SAMS Partnership meetings. Twenty-five partner organisations participated including charities, faith groups and the local council and police. Best practice and increased partnership work emerged through developing joint actions towards a slavery-free community, including:

- Facilitating two modern slavery awareness campaigns within the Borough of Southend
- Monthly participation in council-led strategic modern slavery groups
- Specialist training co-developed and implemented with Southend on Sea Borough Council for Third Sector Organisations, Housing Providers and Healthcare Trusts
- Six local community leaders formed the SAMS Steering Group in order to give accountability and guidance. Three Steering Group meetings held.
- Community intelligence work through one intelligence training session and five intelligence reports submitted to Police.
- Charitable policies developed, including: Confidentiality, Complaints and Grievances, Data Protection, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Equal Opportunities, Lone Working, Professional Boundaries, Safeguarding, Volunteer Management, Whistleblowing.
- New Survivor Care Project, offering community-based support to survivors of MSHT.



World Day Against Trafficking

An awareness campaign led by SAMS and Southend Borough Council involved:

- Front page article in the local paper
 - Four awareness videos created
 - Artwork and awareness posters displayed at Southend Train Station
 - Social media campaign with support of local partners and British Transport Police
- Photo above



Raising Awareness and Training

During 2021, TTF carried out the following awareness raising activities:

- Fourteen awareness raising workshops were conducted within the borough of Southend through SAMS Partnership. These included training for front-line professionals and volunteers who work with vulnerable people within the locality. 305 local people were trained to identify modern slavery and safeguarding. Workshops were conducted with Essex University, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, NHS Essex Partnership Trust and local charities.
- Seven further training and awareness workshops highlighting the work of SAMS Partnership were conducted across England, involving 290 people. This included with the The Clewer Initiative, the Army's 256 Field Hospital and the Eastern Synod of the United Reformed Church.
- Media coverage including two BBC Essex interviews and one article The Echo (Essex newspaper).
- Anti-slavery art campaign with Project 49 (a charity supporting individuals with special needs). Resources developed including T-shirts, posters and flyers.
- Accompanying awareness posters were distributed within the borough to cafes, shops and public places. The campaign included extensive social media coverage.

Labour Exploitation Awareness Campaign

In partnership with the Southend Safeguarding Partnership and Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority the campaign engaged the public on Southend High Street.

*Artwork produced in partnership by SAMS Partnership and Project 49 (a project supporting adults with learning needs).
December 2021*

Feedback from Nora, a Survivor of Modern Slavery

"I found out about SAMS from one of the council staff. I like Ellie [SAMS Survivor Care Co-ordinator] from the first time I saw her because of her big smile and warm heart. She been helping me lots with my personal life and families, with my well being and mental health issues.

With the mentor and befriender I can't thank them enough. I love seeing my befriender and mentor for as long as they still want to see me. A volunteer gave me a free cake for my son's birthday. They made him very happy on his birthday.

They even found the bicycle for me and my kids. I always wanted a bicycle so I can say that really make me happy too. Just before Christmas they send me a gift voucher for me to spend, it's not [a big] amount of money but it's still big amount for me. I appreciate it so much.

I feel so loved by these people and I wish lots of people will have the same experience as me in the future."

Funding

TFF appreciates the 2021 grant funding to enable its work from:

- The Postcode Lottery
- The Essex Community Foundation
- The Rosca Trust
- Southend Community Fund
- Eastern Baptist Association
- The National Lottery
- The Plater Trust
- The Leathersellers' Company Charity Fund
- MB Reckitt Trust

◆ Survivor Care

In April 2021, SAMS Partnership appointed a Survivor Care Co-ordinator to work with the Anti-Slavery Co-ordinator to develop SAMS Survivor Care Project. The purpose of the project is to deliver bespoke, long-term community-based support to survivors of all types of modern slavery and human trafficking in the borough of Southend. Support is delivered through volunteers in the form of befriending, mentoring and practical help. The Survivor Care Project has primarily been funded by a grant from the Postcode Lottery.

Survivor Care Activities during 2021

In setting up this new project, the following activities were undertaken:

- Community mapping, networking and partnership development with local agencies and organisation
- Policies, forms and databases developed for both survivors and volunteers.
- Trauma informed five session training programme developed
- Recruitment, vetting and training of nine volunteers. Four volunteers trained befrienders, four as mentors and one practical helper.
- Five survivors were referred into the project. These included cases of domestic servitude, labour exploitation and sexual exploitation. A range of nationalities were represented, including Angolan, Malaysian, Nigerian, Pakistani, Vietnamese. Four survivors have the additional challenge of being no recourse to public funds.
- Within the first three months of the project offering care to survivors support included: 26 hours of befriending, 11 hours of mentoring and 20+ hours of casework support surrounding debt, education, housing and welfare.
- Referrals were undertaken to a range of sectors including education and work, legal, welfare and the community
- A range of practical help was given to the survivors including financial support for food, clothing, school meals and travel, homemade birthday cake, 2 bike packages (bike, helmet, lights, locks), DIY and tickets for a local amusement park.



Community based survivor care. © Jacky Douglas

Reserves Policy

Reserves will be maintained to ensure core activity can continue during any period of unforeseen difficulty. A proportion of reserves will be maintained in a readily realisable form. The calculation of the required level of reserves is an integral part of the organisation's planning, budget and forecast cycle. It considers:

1. Risks associated with each stream of income and expenditure being different from that budgeted
2. Planned activity level
3. The charity's commitments

On this basis, and having reviewed the policy during the year, the Trustees believe that for 2021 a reserve equivalent to three months' running costs should be maintained. The reserves policy will be reviewed annually.

Accounting Basis

The accounts were prepared on a receipts and payments basis.

Prepared by: D Pratt

Signed on behalf of the Trustees
by P. Dominey

24 February 2022