



Annual Report for the Year Ended 30 April 2023

Overview

During the year under review we have had the privilege of providing residential care for seven survivors of human trafficking, for varying lengths of time, and a family of four Ukrainian refugees. We have also continued to create awareness of human trafficking informally by word of mouth and through our Charity Shop, and have further strengthened our relational networking with other agencies.

Although we are primarily committed to supporting women, the current situation in Northern Ireland is such that there are, as we reported last year, many more men who are survivors of trafficking than there are women. Consequently we have used some of our independent apartments to take in men as well as women. Three of our survivors were women and four were men.

Accommodation

The seven survivors we cared for came from Brazil, Ghana, Lithuania and Northern Ireland. They came from environments of criminal, labour or sexual exploitation. During their time with us they received physical and emotional support, and where appropriate were referred to professional counselling, legal assistance and statutory agencies, and were introduced to a supportive community.

Four have been re-settled in the greater Belfast area, two have returned home to Belfast and one continues with us as they await Justice Department rulings. The Ukrainian family have also settled in Belfast.

Charity Shop

Our charity shop, which provides the greater part of our financial support, also continues to provide informal awareness about human trafficking and attracts a number of volunteers who want to contribute to this arena. It has also become known as a place of support and encouragement in the local community.

Networking

We continue to maintain networking relationships with a number of human trafficking agencies across the UK. Although we have connection with specific agencies in Bulgaria, The Netherlands, Germany, Hungary and Romania (in order to be able to provide alternative accommodation for women who need to be relocated for their safety, or who need local support when returning to their country of origin, should the need arise) it has not been necessary for us to avail of their services in the past year.

Summary

As stated last year, our resources are still under utilised even though we have housed more survivors in the year under review. It is our hope that we will see greater advantage taken of what we have to offer in the future.

Registered Address: 21a Market Street, Downpatrick, Co. Down, BT30 6LP, Northern Ireland
Company number: NI607099 Registered Charity: NIC101627 HMRC ref.no: XT30594
Email: admin@solastrust.org Web: www.solastrust.org

Directors: (Mrs) H Cupples K M Lockhart M K Oman (Mrs) R Oman