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& CARE**

Saving lives. Breaking  
the grip of slavery.

# Victim Navigator Pilot Final Evaluation

From Victim to Witness to Survivor

November 2022

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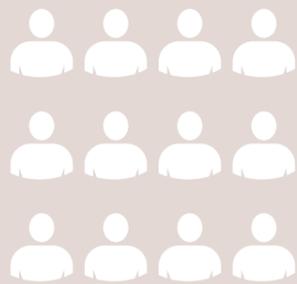


Sep 2018 - June 2022

Victim Navigators



12 VNs



279

Individual survivors supported



7,537

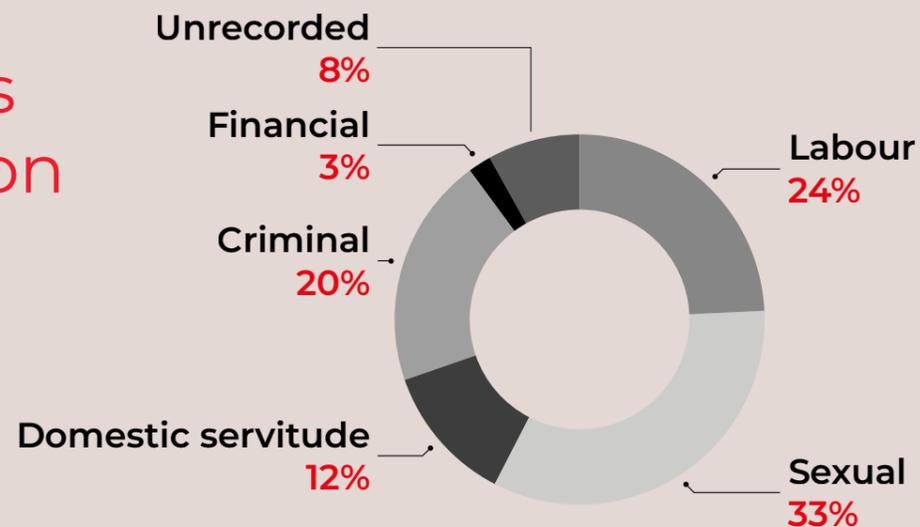
Cases triaged (analysed)



427

Investigations provided with strategic advice only

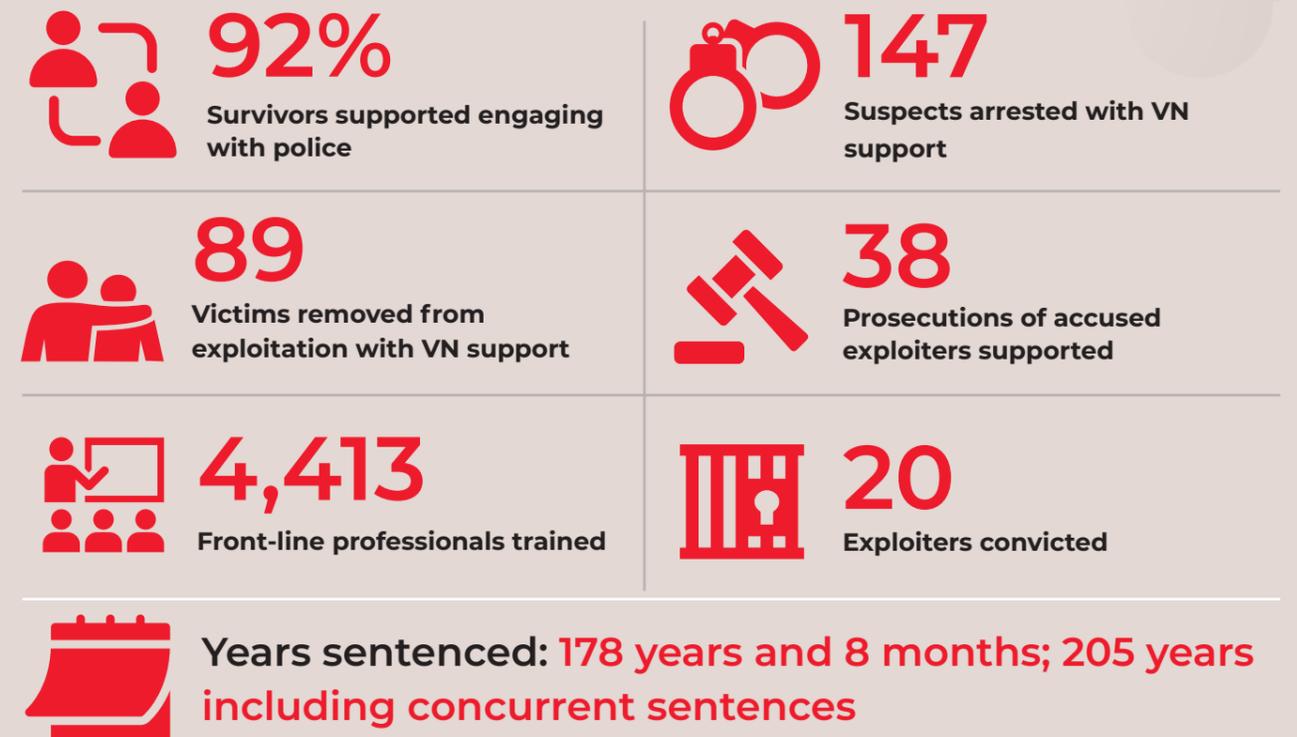
Support plan cases exploitation type:



% Top nationalities of survivors supported



Impact of the pilot to date:



# Executive Summary

## Background, Remit and Methodology:

This document presents findings from an independent evaluation of the Victim Navigator programme. The evaluation ran from Sep 2018 - June 2022. The Navigator role was designed to improve outcomes for survivors of modern slavery, to improve survivor care as well as enhance survivor engagement with police to facilitate investigations into modern slavery and human trafficking. The Navigator role was to be embedded within police forces, with full access to the details of modern slavery cases, but with independence from the police to enable trust to be built with the survivor. This was a unique feature of the role as most support services sit outside the police. The Navigator would be available to engage survivors from the moment of identification by police, providing trauma-informed and specialist support during the crucial post-rescue period and then providing seamless ongoing coordination between the survivor and the officers investigating their case. At the start of the evaluation, Navigators were in post in two police forces, Kent and Surrey. As of July 2022, it is present in 6 police forces, plus the

East Midlands Special Operations Unit (covering 5 forces) and the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority; with 12 Navigators, including a specialist for young people and a specialist focussing on trafficking in relation to organised immigration crime, one National Navigator focussing on joint investigations with overseas forces; and one central European coordinator employed.

The aim of the independent evaluation was to act as a critical friend throughout the lifetime of the pilot, to provide 'action research' and live feedback to Justice and Care, and to independently assess the effectiveness of the model. The research took a mixed methods approach including 72 interviews across police, non-police stakeholders, survivors and Navigators and Justice and Care staff. This was complemented by access to operational meetings and quantitative data from Justice and Care's case management system (CMS), a bespoke system created for the Victim Navigator pilot

## Findings

The evaluation focused on the objectives and outcomes outlined in the theory of change. Through the triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data, across a range of sources, the evaluation has found evidence to support the achievement of all seven objectives:

- 1. Help survivors to navigate and secure more effective support post identification, including access to statutory help, support and provision through effective advocacy**

According to CMS data, 737 specific 'support needs' of 279 survivors have been met through the Navigators' casework (2.6 on average per survivor). These support needs range from securing safe accommodation, immigration advice, medical treatment or counselling to retrieving property, providing food and clothing to obtaining compensation. These support needs form part of an individual survivor's safety and support plans, which are agreed and co-created with the survivor and are specific to their

current needs, vulnerabilities and aspirations. The evaluation has demonstrated that Navigators are able to support survivors' practical and emotional needs, in a timely way, filling gaps that other support services cannot provide and acting as a care navigator as well as care provider. CMS data provided evidence that it is not just a quantity of needs being met, but these needs are met in a quality way (as evidenced through a survivor survey and interviews). Several respondents in the survivor survey flagged the transformative nature of the holistic support provided and interviewees stated their well-being had been improved.

- 2. Establish greater trust between survivors, the police and the wider criminal justice process**

Survivors, police and non-police stakeholders all independently commented on the level of distrust survivors have of authority and police. This, in part, was due to perpetrators reinforcing this narrative, but also due to previous experiences with police in home countries. Because of Navigators' relationship and partner arrangements with police, they were able to broker better relationships between police and survivors, allaying concerns and often being a friendly face at the point of rescue, throughout the criminal investigation and the prosecution (where applicable). In the survivor survey, individuals highlighted the importance of being treated with compassion and the knock on effect this had on trusting others.

- 3. Foster greater engagement from survivors in information sharing, police investigations and, if relevant, prosecutions**

### **– strengthening efforts to bring exploiters to justice**

As a result of the trusting relationship outlined above, survivors were more willing, with the support of the Navigator, to talk to police, provide evidence and remain engaged throughout the criminal justice process. The fact that Navigators were also able to provide information to the survivors, from the police, supported a greater trusting relationship as police were now viewed as an ally rather than an enemy or someone to be feared. Survivors supported by Navigators have been more willing to assist police investigations and prosecutions - with greater engagement with police resulting in improved investigative outcomes such as numbers of suspects arrested, and the hope that as cases progress to trial, a result of the survivors' evidence and testimony will be more exploiters brought to justice. Data from the CMS revealed that at their latest or final engagement level, 92% of survivors<sup>1</sup> supported by a Navigator were willing to engage on some level with the police, while only 8% were not. Using a comparator sample, Navigator clients were almost five times more likely to engage with supporting a prosecution (39%) than the sample of non-Navigator supported MSHT cases (n=64) from Surrey and Essex (8%). For cases which have progressed to prosecutions, having the support of a Navigator was said to be invaluable by survivors. They were able to assist in practical arrangements such as seeing the court in advance as well as preparing survivors for the ways in which defence barristers often treated them during cross-examination. A number of survivors said they would not have 'got through' the trial process without the support of the Navigator.

<sup>1</sup> Of 272 support plan cases where police engagement level was recorded

Importantly, cases where prosecution took place have resulted in successful convictions. Further victims and perpetrators were also identified through survivors engaging with police.

#### 4. Free up police time and resource to focus on criminal investigations and wider organised crime groups, by managing day-to-day police contact with survivors

Evidence from police officers in all force areas indicates that freeing up police time was a distinguishing feature of the Victim Navigator programme. Detectives' large workloads means they cannot provide the level of contact with survivors that they want or require. Navigators took on responsibilities related to survivor support, ensuring survivors' needs were met, and had regular contact with survivors in relation to their recovery and to keep them engaged with or updated about the criminal investigation. This meant that police officers were able to focus on the criminal investigation and make best use of their expertise and skill set, whilst knowing the survivor was supported.

#### 5. Build relationships, broker support and maintain contact for survivors in source countries, as required

Justice and Care developed a Fast Track Voluntary and Assisted Return package which offered survivors a safe and supported return to their home countries. To date, Navigators have helped repatriate 32 survivors to seven different countries. Navigators played a key role in ensuring survivors were safeguarded and had access to temporary safe accommodation and support services while they made arrangements for their repatriation. For some survivors this required obtaining the necessary travel documents as well as organising flights and, during the coronavirus pandemic, ensuring that all procedures related to covid were completed. Another significant feature of

the repatriation process was the way in which Navigators, with the help of Justice and Care sought local contacts in countries of origin who would be able to meet the survivor on arrival and ensure their safety and act as a source of support.

#### 6. Learn lessons for UK Government and national police/NGO strategies, as well as prove a model that could be promoted and spread

At the start of the independent evaluation the Victim Navigator model was in place in two police forces. Since 2018, the model has been expanded to other forces across the UK. Navigators have contributed to national learning resources to aid the police response, for example Justice and Care's 'Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking: Identifying a Potential Victim, and Initial Response' and 'Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking/Clandestine Entry' guidelines provided to all police vehicles in Essex and Kent. Moreover, in Surrey the Navigator helped push modern slavery up the police force agenda and it has led to additional staffing with a modern slavery remit. The findings from the interim evaluation have also been shared with the UK Government by way of highlighting best practice.

#### 7. To build the capacity of police and other stakeholders to identify and effectively respond to survivors of modern slavery, and to establish effective referral pathways for survivors including into the Victim Navigator programme, through the provision of bespoke training sessions

To date 2,432 police officers and 2,081 other stakeholders have been trained. This has focused on the topic areas of lack of awareness of modern slavery offences, how to identify victims, and forms of support available to survivors including the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). Post-training surveys were distributed to assess the effectiveness of this. Although uptake of

the evaluation surveys was small, more than 95% of respondents said that the training had substantially improved their knowledge of how survivors can be encouraged to engage with their investigation and 83% said that the training had substantially improved their confidence in investigating modern slavery.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The value of having a Navigator embedded in a police force affords benefits to survivors themselves, individual officers, teams tackling modern slavery, and, as the project has evolved, the repercussions of this on survivor retention through to successful prosecution outcomes has been borne out. As a result of this evidence, the independent evaluators are able to recommend that the Victim Navigator model be rolled out on a national scale to police forces across the country. However in order for the success and fidelity of the original model to be continued, there are a number of factors that underpin the successful implementation of the Victim Navigator programme that must be considered. We outline the other key factors below that should be adhered to in any national roll out.

#### The importance of working with but not for the police

The fact that Navigators are distinct and unique from other survivor support roles in the area of MSHT in their link to police seems to be one of the most important features of the Pilot. They are associated with police but independent. This is a careful balance that needs to be maintained and adds value in a number of ways. Being able to access police records in a timely fashion, without relying on police resources is a fundamental success principle, as this process decision has an impact on Navigators' early engagement with a case.



**Recommendation: Navigators retain their position as an independent, but integrated, staff member working alongside police with access to relevant systems.**

#### Force Readiness - seeing the value of a Navigator

'Force readiness' refers to the police's willingness to utilise the resource of the Navigator and permit them access to information and intelligence. Partnership between Justice and Care and police forces and other enforcement agencies is central to the implementation of the Victim Navigator programme. The programme has been successful where relations between police and Navigators are based on mutual respect for each other's professional expertise, understanding each other's roles and responsibilities, regular communication and reciprocal information sharing, and trust that they operate in the best interest of the survivor and of the criminal investigation.

**Recommendation: Navigators are only placed in forces where the force (at both a strategic and operational level) have an intrinsic understanding of the value of this role and are willing to work together, share information and utilise the resource to afford better outcomes for survivors and police investigations. Justice and Care should assess this 'readiness' before placing a Navigator into a force.**

### Meeting Survivors at the Earliest Opportunity

It is key to ensure wherever possible Navigators meet survivors at the earliest stage as the first 48 hours are likely to be crucial for them to reach out to potential victims of modern slavery and to offer support. There is considerable evidence that survivors are distrustful of the police, and thus Navigators, as independent support workers from a charity, have the possibility of building a bridge with survivors. This view was endorsed by police interviewees. Opportunities for Navigators to attend warrants and operations, and meeting survivors as early as possible, should be encouraged.

**Recommendation:** Police forces should agree to Navigators being able to meet survivors at the earliest opportunity, including attending rescue operations where feasible.

### The breadth of support from Navigators; Agility and Flexibility- a solution focused approach

Navigators are able to be responsive, flexible and creative in resolving their support needs, and no issue is too great or too small for them to attend to. They are solution focused and problem solving. Survivors gave examples of occasions where both their practical and emotional needs are covered and considered by Navigators. This is particularly important given the length of time that investigations take and the state of 'limbo' survivors are often left in during this time. To this end, the fact that support from the Navigator is open ended and can follow the survivor wherever they go (even if this is international) is incredibly important for continuity of care.

**Recommendation:** Navigators should be able to make autonomous decisions about how to support survivors, with what needs. On expansion, the ability to move quickly and get sign off on funding for clothes, phones etc should not be lost. Navigators should

also retain their ability to work with survivors indefinitely.

### A caring but tenacious nature

Navigators are passionate and dedicated to their role which contributes to its success. Navigators were described as compassionate and friendly, genuinely caring about their work and the welfare of survivors. Further, Navigators are successful at their roles, in part because they have the confidence and tenacity to challenge decisions (e.g. from police) and keep the survivor at the focus of investigations.

**Recommendation:** So far, Justice and Care have recruited successfully to the Navigator roles, looking not only for skills and competencies but personal qualities that make the role a success. This should be retained in expansion attempts.

### Support from Justice and Care

A further key success factor for the Navigator role, is the level of support and supervision offered by Justice and Care. The intense nature of the role, which often requires working unsociable hours, travel across the country and internationally, cannot be ignored. The evaluators have been working on the project since 2018 and the level of staff retention speaks volumes to the infrastructure Justice and Care provides, organisationally, around the Navigators. One Navigator commented that he had never felt so valued before in a role.

**Recommendation:** As the team expands, the infrastructure and governance from Justice and Care should be retained to ensure that staff well-being remains a central tenet of the role.



"[The Navigator] has given me my life and self belief back. Nothing is too much trouble and whenever I have needed her she has been there. No one has ever helped me as much in my life."

(Survivor, Survey Respondent)

# 1. Background and Context

Justice and Care is a British nongovernmental organisation (NGO). It has worked in South Asia for nearly a decade, helping states and law enforcement agencies rescue women and children from slavery, trafficking and other forms of exploitation. Justice and Care works to prevent human trafficking in the most at-risk communities, to protect survivors and help them recover, and, where appropriate, support the state's efforts to bring criminals and their wider networks to justice.

Human trafficking involves children, women and men being recruited, harboured or brought into a situation of exploitation through the use of violence, deception or coercion. They are then exploited and abused as a commodity leaving the victims of these crimes without a voice, very little support and with difficulties navigating what is a complex statutory and voluntary system of welfare and criminal justice. This complex system presented an opportunity for Justice and Care to identify a possible solution.

After extensive discussions with the National Modern Slavery Police Transformation Unit, police forces and leading national stakeholders, Justice and Care designed a pilot project in 2018 involving 'Victim Navigators' (Navigators). It entailed embedding specialist independent workers into senior policing teams to provide expert input to modern slavery investigations and to directly support survivors of modern slavery from the moment of identification. The Victim Navigator programme was therefore devised to fill a specific and important gap in existing service provision by forming a trusted bridge between the police and survivors of modern slavery; and by flexibly and independently brokering support

from external specialist services according to individual survivors' needs.

The Navigator role was to be embedded within law enforcement, with full access to the details of modern slavery cases, but with independence from the police to enable trust to be built with the survivor. This was a unique feature of the role as most support services sit outside the police. The Navigator would be available to engage survivors from the moment of identification by police, providing trauma informed and specialist support during the crucial post-rescue period and then providing seamless ongoing coordination between the survivor and the officers investigating their case. Meanwhile, Navigators would help survivors understand their rights and entitlements and co-create with survivors an individualised support plan, according to their needs, priorities and aspirations. Navigators would act as an advocate and where necessary chaperone, helping survivors to 'navigate' the complex landscape of services and entitlements and their journey through the criminal justice process.

The pilot was initially a partnership between Justice and Care and two police forces, Kent and Surrey. As of July 2022, it is now present in 6 police forces, the East Midlands Special Operations Unit (covering 5 forces) and the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority; with 12 Navigators, including a specialist for young people (in recognition of the high numbers coming through of young survivors), a specialist focussing on trafficking in relation to organised immigration crime, one National Navigator focussing on joint investigations with overseas forces and one central European coordinator employed.

## 1.1 Role of Navigators

The core functions of the Navigators were set out in the initial Pilot documentation but based on interviews with Navigators, police officers, survivors and other stakeholders, it is evident that their role has also developed to reflect local contexts and in response to changing conditions like the coronavirus pandemic. Based on the evidence collected the role of the Navigators can be summarised in terms of the activities they undertake which include:

- Reviewing modern slavery cases and raising concerns about how investigations have been pursued or closed too soon.
- Identifying modern slavery cases that the Navigator will pursue.
- Providing strategic advice to Officers in Case (OIC) in order to support potential victims and to aid a criminal investigation.
- Providing or helping to organise survivor support during police operations on modern slavery cases, e.g. reception centres, provision of toiletries.
- Participating in police operations as a non-police presence in order to engage with and support any potential victims identified.
- Offering advice to potential victims on options to help with safeguarding and recovery.
- Developing a support plan in conjunction with the survivor that reflects their needs, on an on-going basis.
- Engaging with survivors on a long term basis to ensure their needs are met and to

- act as a bridge with the police and other support agencies.
- Supporting survivors and Officers in Case before, during and after a trial.
- Providing training or professional development to police officers and other key stakeholders.
- Engaging with survivors based on National Referral Mechanism forms disseminated to the police force by the Competent Authority that received them.
- Developing resources to help police officers understand and identify modern slavery and its different forms, the context for particular operations, and how to engage with different groups of potential victims.
- Identifying gaps in safeguarding and support and seeking solutions.
- Accessing funds and connections to aid a criminal investigation or to support survivors.
- Networking with stakeholders who can support survivors, brokering support with other agencies

## 1.2 Location of Navigators

In designing the Victim Navigator Pilot, Justice and Care determined that the Navigators would sit within the Serious and Organised Crime Directorate or the Public Protection Unit of the participating police forces. The first three Navigators that joined Justice and Care demonstrate the different ways police forces are approaching modern slavery, with Navigators located in Serious and Organised Crime in Kent and Essex and in Public Protection in Surrey. The fourth Navigator joined the Modern Slavery Unit in Project Challenger, which was the partnership approach adopted by Greater Manchester Police to tackle serious and organised crime in all its forms. A second difference was that Navigators in Kent and Essex joined recently created specialist Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking (MSHT) Units that expanded over the life of the project, while the Navigator in Greater Manchester joined a well-established Modern Slavery Unit. The Surrey Navigator, on the other hand, sat with Public Protection Officers and worked with a part-time DC who was the force's tactical advisor for modern slavery and human trafficking. Her role was influential in the decision to pilot a Support Hub on Modern Slavery in Surrey which has been located within serious and organised crime. The expansion of the Victim Navigator programme in 2019 and 2020 entailed Navigators joining the Metropolitan Police Service, West Yorkshire, Border Force in Scotland and Police Scotland, and were embedded in specialist units dealing with modern slavery and exploitation. In addition a Navigator focused on child survivors of modern slavery was appointed to the specialist Raptor team in Essex. Further developments in the programme have led to the appointment of a Navigator to work at regional organised crime unit level (East Midlands Special Operations Unit), one to work on national and international

investigations involving Joint Investigative Teams, one to work with the Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority, and one to work on organised immigration crime in Essex and surrounding counties. Thus there are 12 UK-based Navigators based in a range of police forces and other enforcement agencies in the UK and who have been in post for a period of several months to three and four years.

Justice and Care has also set up a Romanian hub which employs a coordinator to oversee the partnership with the Romanian government, police and local NGOs, and two Navigators who support survivors who return from the UK as well as survivors identified locally.

The European Operational Coordinator supports and coordinates the work of all the Navigators from the Justice and Care office.

The development of the Victim Navigator Pilot and its expansion affords an opportunity to test the model in different settings: in forces with newly developed modern slavery teams, those with long standing expert teams, a force with no engagement with modern slavery as well as forces that covered rural areas versus metropolitan areas, and in a European country where many UK survivors originate. The specialist Child/Young Person and Organised Immigration Crime Navigator roles and Navigators in Romania remain, however outside the scope of this evaluation.



## 1.3 Navigator core activities

Throughout the evaluation, it was identified that Navigators support police and victims in the following ways:

### Classified Cases:

Navigators work with their local police forces and review cases recorded on police systems as having potential modern slavery elements. During the triage process Navigators select cases that meet their selection criteria. For example 7,537 potential modern slavery cases were reviewed and 'classified' as inappropriate for Navigator engagement since programme inception. Of the cases classified, 27% were not progressed because the survivor was a minor, and therefore should be supported by the local authority. 20% were deemed not modern slavery, 14% involved overseas exploitation only, 20% were intel reports only or Police National Database checks and in 9% cases insufficient details were disclosed to progress any form of investigation. Other cases were either transferred out to other forces (4%) or other agencies (1%), the risk was deemed too high (1%) or the reason was not recorded (5%). What is evident is that Navigators engage in cases where they feel they can add value to a criminal investigation through strategic advice or in support of a survivor.

### Strategic Advice

Having selected a case as relevant, Navigators offer 'Strategic Advice' to the officer working on the case. This might entail the Navigator encouraging the officer to build the evidence base in order to identify someone as a victim of modern slavery or helping the police plan an operation that puts the survivor's needs at the centre, and ensuring the National Referral Mechanism process is followed

so there can be more efficient access to support. The scale of Strategic Advice offered in a force area can vary and is influenced by their partnership with a specialist modern slavery team or with local detectives who have little or no experience of modern slavery. It is also affected during periods when the force plans intensification weeks around prevention and enforcement activities in regard to modern slavery. Navigators are involved in operational planning around the local delivery of Operation Aidant, a National Crime Agency (NCA) coordinated activity which entails local police forces working alongside partner agencies to focus on vulnerability, exploitation and modern slavery.

A more recent form of Strategic Advice entails Navigators helping support large scale operations in areas without a Navigator. This advice has included helping plan survivor support during the implementation of warrants and in reception centres where survivors are offered services and the opportunity to participate in a debrief.

Strategic Advice only has been provided to 427 modern slavery investigations to date, open for an average of 64 days with case duration ranging from 0-336 days.<sup>2</sup>

The lengthy time span of some Strategic Advice cases arises from the nature of criminal investigations which may take months to gather evidence to identify victims or to engage in planned operations. Between July 2021 and June 2022, 24 ongoing Strategic Advice cases were open on average each month across the programme.

It was apparent from interviews with police officers, that they valued the expertise of the

<sup>2</sup> This excludes the five longest strategic advice cases (404 days, 487 days, 519 days, 623 days and 709 days) as these are outliers. Including these five, the mean case duration is 70 days.

Navigators, and the Strategic Advice they offered. It helped them be more effective in their criminal investigations. A number of different outcomes were identified during the course of the evaluation arising from Strategic Advice and they are set out in the diagram opposite.

Not all modern slavery investigations result in the identification of victims, and so not all Strategic Advice cases supported by Navigators go on to become 'support plan' cases (described below). However, a significant proportion of the investigations provided with strategic advice went on to result in victims being identified and going on to receive individualised support ('support plans') from Navigators - 112 of the 279 survivors supported with full support plans (40%) entered support plans following Navigators' strategic advice to the police investigation into their case. The remaining support plans were for survivors already identified in police investigations prior to Navigators' involvement.

#### Support Plans:

Survivors who consent to engage with the Navigator and have discussed their specific support needs with them are identified as Support Plan cases. In the period after they have been identified, Navigators have more continuous engagement with survivors as they help them access a range of services, seek to ensure they are and feel safe, and provide a regular and consistent listening ear.

Over time, it is evident that some survivors require less ongoing support and have 'light touch' support while others require ongoing engagement to help address complex needs around mental health, finance, education, employment, and healthy relationships. However, as trials are scheduled, survivors who have agreed to support a prosecution and act as witnesses require more support from Navigators as well as other professionals in order to

deal with the anxieties and fear that can arise. The ability of Navigators to respond to the broad and varying requirements of survivors is an important feature and strength of this role.

Between July 2021 and June 2022, an average of 75 Support Plan cases were open each month across the programme. The longer-established Navigators in the Metropolitan Police Service, Surrey, Essex, Greater Manchester Police, and West Yorkshire averaged 11.5 open support plans per Navigator per month.

279 survivors had been provided with full support plans by the end of June 2022. Support Plan cases to date (including those not yet closed) were open for an average of 246 days. The shortest Support Plan case opened and closed on the same day, while the longest Support Plan case (that has opened and closed) lasted almost three years (997 days). There are an additional four cases that are currently open for 1000 days or more, with the longest open for over 42 months. The variability, as well as length of support provided, attests to a significant feature of the Victim Navigator programme which is that it is needs oriented not time-limited.

Data collected by the Navigators in relation to survivors' engagement with the police and the criminal justice process during their recovery journey, shows evidence that Navigators have an impact, as discussed in the 'findings'. They help ensure survivors are safeguarded and are willing to provide valuable information to the police. Moreover, they help survivors feel able to participate in a prosecution and act as witnesses in a trial.





“He always believed in me and never judged me, he has also shown me that even official persons are genuine and caring in all stages of my ordeal.”  
 (Survivor Survey Respondent)

## Survivor Journey and Role of Navigator in Survivor Recovery and Criminal Justice Process

### Modern Slavery Victim Identification

Modern slavery victims are identified through police investigations, NRM referrals from other counties, or victims seeking help from the police. Navigators who attend police operations may help in the victim identification process.

### Victim Safeguarding

Police have responsibility for ensuring a victim is safeguarded and work with the Navigator to ensure the victim is in safe accommodation. Safe accommodation may include pre-NRM accommodation, referral into the National Referral Mechanism which will provide access to a safehouse, housing supplied by friends or family or by other organisations that work with survivors of modern slavery.

### Initial Survivor Support and Care

Survivors who consent are referred into the NRM and receive care through the Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract in a safehouse or through outreach support. Police ask survivors if they consent to working with the Navigator. The Navigator then engages with survivors to identify their support needs and to help them access appropriate services. This might include co-working with NRM providers to furnish additional support to victims, e.g. counselling in their own language.

### Ongoing Survivor Support and Care

The Navigator regularly contacts victims to check on their well-being, both those who are being looked after in the NRM as well as those who are living without NRM support. Navigators' regular contact, practical help in meeting survivors' varied needs, and advocacy on the survivor's behalf with other support providers, helps build a relationship of trust. The rapport and trust established between the survivor and Navigator enables the Navigator to act as a bridge (an information conduit) between the survivor and the police. The support and care provided by the Navigator enables the police to focus their attention on the criminal investigation. Police are free of responsibility to ensure survivors are supported and can focus on their police role.

### Helping Survivors Engage with Police and a Criminal Investigation

- Some survivors are willing to engage with police after being identified as a victim, whereas others need a period of recovery. The Navigator can act as a trusted bridge to police until the survivor is ready to engage with police directly and to consider supporting prosecution.
- The Navigator provides practical and emotional support when a survivor participates in an Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) interview or in providing a witness statement.

### Aiding Survivors to Support a Prosecution

- The Navigator increases contact and support as a trial approaches as survivors experience increased stress, anxiety and fear.
- Officers in Case (OIC) maintain regular communication with the Navigator in order to offer information about the case and in order to keep abreast of how the survivor is coping and any adverse physical or mental conditions that they need to respond to.
- OIC and Navigator communicate about what special measures will be survivor who will provide testimony in court.
- The VNs provides practical and emotional support prior to the trial. This includes support for reviewing the AB interview, and making arrangements with Witness Care for pre-trial visits to court.

### Supporting Survivors' Participation in a Trial

- The Navigator provides practical and emotional support to the survivor during the trial. This includes accompanying them to the court and taking them home, offering reassurance prior to testimony and providing a listening ear after their court appearance in order to help them process what has happened. It can also mean helping the victim engage in a Sec 28 recorded interview.
- The Navigator acts as a bridge to the OIC who is focused on supporting the prosecutor with the case but needs to be kept informed about how the survivor is coping prior to and after giving testimony, so they can provide an appropriate response.
- The Navigator may be the person who has to inform the survivor about delays in the trial and respond to the anxiety and anger it evokes.
- The Navigator provides ongoing support as survivors may feel belittled, stigmatised, disbelieved, anxious and fearful as a result of giving testimony.

### Supporting Survivors after the Trial

- Both the OIC and Navigator remain in contact with the survivor after the trial as even with a conviction this remains an anxious time, as survivors wait to hear about the sentences imposed on those who exploited and abused them.
- The Navigator continues to support the survivor as they move on from the trial and deal with the emotional upheaval it has caused. The Navigator will support them in their next steps towards more independence.

### Developing an Exit Strategy for Survivors

- Survivors exit the support provided by the Navigator at different stages. Some may disengage early on after identification, and others will be supported for different lengths of time based on need once the police have closed a criminal investigation. Navigators' engagement with survivors participating in a criminal investigation and then prosecution may last for many months and possibly years owing to the time consuming nature of some investigations and court delays. After the end of trial and sentencing, Navigators have to judge how much ongoing support they will continue to provide and propose an exit strategy, as they need to end engagement with some survivors, in order to ensure they have capacity to take on new cases.

## Case Study: Op Hibernia

Since September 2019, Justice and Care has been supporting Julia\*, a Ukrainian female survivor of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Over this almost three year period, thanks to the courage and perseverance of the survivor, and the expert and steadfast support of her Navigator, her engagement with the police has contributed to the establishment of an international taskforce, the identification of 120 additional victims, six arrests and the conviction of five exploiters. Meanwhile, Julia is reclaiming the independence and dignity that was denied her during her years of horrendous abuse, and is now focusing on her recovery journey and her pursuit of a normal and fulfilling life.

### Building Trust

When Julia first encountered Surrey law enforcement during a brothel search in September 2019, she was distressed, fearful and highly distrustful of authorities. Lured to the UK under the false promise of legitimate hotel work, for five years, she had been controlled by a criminal gang who had seized her passport and forced her to engage in prostitution under harsh and threatening conditions.

After being removed to a safehouse by the police, the Navigator began to work with Julia, addressing her immediate needs and slowly building up a relationship of mutual trust and respect. Eventually, she felt secure and empowered enough to begin sharing extensive information with the Navigator and the police, mapping out the entire Organised Criminal Gang (OCG) that had been

responsible for her exploitation, including their members, organisational structure, and identifying a number of locations of interest.

### An expanding mission

It soon became clear that the information provided by Julia was leading to the detection and disruption of a large and complex international criminal network. The scope of the investigation eventually expanded to Poland, where the same OCG was actively exploiting women and engaged in other criminal activity. In response to the expansion of the operation, the Navigator helped facilitate Surrey Police's first ever Joint Investigative Team with Polish police. This investigation resulted in the arrest of five suspects in the UK and one in Poland, charged with offences including modern slavery, controlling prostitution, creation of extreme images and more. Meanwhile, due to evidence given by the survivor to our Navigator, and passed on to Polish Police, 11 owners and operators of a website on which Julia and hundreds of other females were being advertised were arrested and the website was shut down.

Based on her extensive knowledge of the case and expertise in survivor care, the Navigator attended all brothel warrants and welfare visits related to this case, to provide as many survivors as possible with the information they needed to access support and make informed decisions about their engagement with police.

### A glimmer of justice

Using a trauma-informed approach, the Navigator supported Julia to testify against her exploiters, while a second key witness was supported by the MPS Navigator. The Navigators provided intensive emotional and logistical support throughout the trial, providing updates about court proceedings, and making practical arrangements for both survivors to attend court.

Ultimately, one member of the OCG was convicted on a modern slavery charge while two others were convicted on multiple charges including controlling prostitution for gain, facilitating travel with a view to sexual exploitation, possessing criminal property and fraud. A fourth defendant pleaded guilty to conspiracy to control prostitution. Although the sentences, ranging from 15 to 40 months, were felt to be disappointingly low, the defendants are likely to be extradited to Poland to face further criminal charges upon completion of these sentences.

The Navigator flagged that Julia's testimony was critical in securing these convictions: *"The category of a modern slavery charge, largely, and so far, has required a victim's testimony, and [Julia] would not have initially given the information to facilitate that early investigation had we not built that bridge and that trust with her."*

In recognition of their stellar work, the Navigator and the investigative team received a Divisional Award, with the Chief Superintendent highlighting the importance of their victim-centred approach, flagging

that *"their victim care has been exceptional, utilising support from outside networks to ensure victims are supported."*

### Supporting recovery

Over their almost three year relationship, the Navigator has provided hundreds of hours of practical and emotional support to Julia, including advice on housing, health, employment and education, and often just moral support and a sympathetic ear. From the very beginning of their engagement, the Navigator enrolled Julia with a trauma counsellor, with funding provided to enable the long-term support that will be vital to her recovery. Additionally, she is being advised on available compensation routes and is being represented by a pro bono legal team in a criminal injury (CICA) claim. Praising the tireless, holistic support provided by her Navigator, Julia said: *"You're not just helping, you're understanding the problem and know how to solve it every time, or find the solution. Not everyone is so lucky as me."*

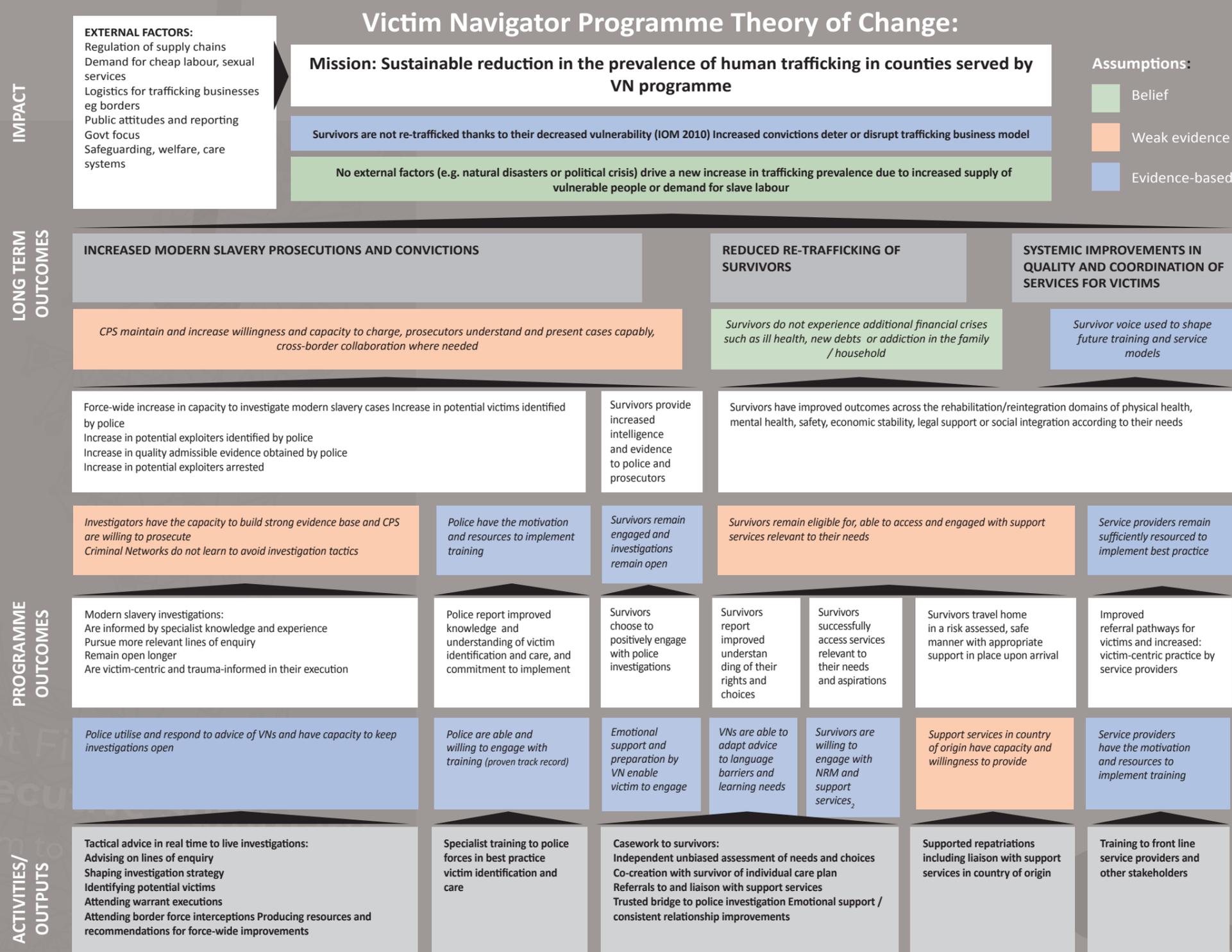
### The road ahead

With many members of the OCG that exploited her still walking free, Julia remains engaged with the police and is open to providing additional information in the future. In the meantime, the Navigator continues to work closely with her and is willing to support her in any way that she can going forward. Most recently, the Navigator has linked Julia to a local Ukrainian Support hub, which the survivor is benefiting from hugely saying: *"I feel the love, I feel the support when I come. It makes me feel like I'm home."*

\*Name changed to protect identity

## 1.4 Theory of Change

A theory of change was developed by Justice and Care to help visualise the process by which the programme sought to achieve its objectives; and also to help identify any key assumptions upon which this process depended, which could be tested and confirmed or refuted through the work. The diagram below, flowing upwards, outlines the key programme activities, how these were expected to result in the intended short and long-term outcomes, and the wider impact that the achievement of these outcomes would contribute to. It also identifies external factors affecting the long-term impact which are outside the control of the project. The extent to which the theory of change was validated by the evaluation findings is discussed in the 'findings'.



## 1.5 Evaluation methodology

In order to ascertain the effectiveness of the Navigator role, and the extent to which the original aims were being met, Justice and Care commissioned an evaluation to run concurrently with the pilot. There were two distinct yet complementary strands of this evaluation, one focusing on survivor impact and one focusing on police and justice outcomes (including survivor engagement with police). Dr Ruth Van Dyke, from the Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Abuse and Exploitation at St Mary's and Dr Sarah Senker from ATD Research and Consultancy were commissioned to undertake the evaluation. The research adopted a mixed method approach that included: an initial content analysis of police logs, questionnaires to be completed by police officers, interviews with police officers, Navigators, survivors of modern slavery and with other stakeholders. Data collected in relation to key performance indicators was also collated via a case management system (CMS). As the programme and evaluation unfolded, additional sources of research evidence emerged. These included feedback in Monthly Operational Meetings attended by the evaluators, telephone conversations with Navigators about the cases referred to in their monthly reports and email correspondence with the Navigators or other Justice and Care stakeholders.

Over the four year period of the evaluation, a number of interviews have been conducted with a wide range of stakeholders including: survivors, Navigators, police officers with operational and strategic roles, and partner organisations. Some participants have been interviewed more than once in order to obtain insight into how the Victim Navigator programme developed over time. Interviews were conducted until saturation was achieved. For this report additional

interviews were conducted, court was observed in the case of Operation Rossville and a workshop for Navigators was held. In addition Navigators were asked to disseminate a survey to survivors in order to obtain anonymous feedback on their experience of the programme, to determine which aspects of the Navigators' support they were making use of, and which they found most helpful. It was also intended to identify areas where they felt support could be improved. The survey was disseminated between June and August 2022 to all survivors with an open support plan at that time and was made available in 6 languages (English, Romanian, Hungarian, Albanian, Vietnamese and Polish) in order to aid completion. The survey was completed by 15 survivors, two-thirds (n=10) of whom had been receiving help from a Navigator for more than one year. In addition, analysis of police records of modern slavery cases in Surrey and Essex from 2018 prior to Navigators involvement was also conducted to provide a benchmark of survivor engagement with police without Navigator's involvement.

The total number of interviews completed over the lifetime of the evaluation are as follows

Navigators	<b>8</b>
Senior Officers with Oversight of Victim Navigator Programme	<b>11</b>
Officers in Case (OICs)	<b>18</b>
Senior Officers from other police forces who involved Navigators in large scale operations	<b>11</b>
Justice and Care Senior Management	<b>1</b>
Survivors	<b>17</b>
Non-police stakeholders	<b>18</b>

The scope of this evaluation relates to the main Navigator programme in the UK. It does not include the more recent additions of Navigators in Romania, and of specialist roles focussed on criminal exploitation of young people in county lines and on organised immigration crime (as detailed in section 1.2), which differ significantly in context and focus and which already are or will be the subject of separate evaluations.

"Most times victims do not wish to engage, it is nice to know I can call on Justice and Care so that I know victims are looked after and given every opportunity to be helped, which then takes a lot of pressure from me as an investigator to carry on with the rest of the investigation."

(Police survey respondent)

## 2. Findings

### Objective 1: Help survivors to navigate and secure more effective support post identification, including access to statutory help, support and provision through effective advocacy

At interview, survivors, Navigators, police and non-police stakeholders discussed the range of needs survivors presented with on rescue. These ranged from physical and mental health needs, practical needs for accommodation, food and finance, as well as legal aid. This was consolidated by the survivor survey (n=15) where survivors reported receiving help across a range of areas, reflecting the wide remit of the Navigator role. The most common areas of support noted was help to understand the police investigation (80%), emotional support (73%) help to understand rights and entitlements, and access to support services such as housing and healthcare (both 67%). The types of support that survivors described as being the most useful or important to them were similarly ranked, with support to understand the police investigation, and emotional support also viewed as the most useful (both 67%), followed by help with accessing food or essential items and help with understanding and supporting the prosecution on their exploiters (both 47%).

During interviews, survivors and non-police stakeholders were able to reflect on the fact that no issue was too big or too small to warrant support from the Navigators. However, it was not just about the quantity or range of needs being met, but rather the quality of care received. In the survey, survivors were overwhelmingly positive about the quality of the support provided by their Navigator, giving them an average score of 93/100 in terms of how helpful the Navigator has been in assisting them with the issues most important to them.

Survivors described that, on rescue, they were fearful of police and perpetrators, and had concerns for their own safety as well as the well-being of their family. The survivor-focused nature of the Navigator's role, means that Navigators have responded to needs expressed when people are identified as victims of modern slavery and to risks that arise from being victims of a modern slavery crime where their safety is an immediate concern.

Navigators have aided police to refer survivors of modern slavery into the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) which provides safe accommodation and a range of support services. However, they have also helped ensure emergency accommodation is available prior to NRM housing or sought safe accommodation and services for adult survivors who do not consent to enter the NRM. Navigators have helped survivors access the following, although the list is not exhaustive:

- Safe accommodation
- Financial support
- Access to legal advice
- Access to medical treatment, including dental treatment
- Access to mental health services, including counselling in their own language
- Help with asylum applications, Universal Credit, temporary housing
- Help with accessing English as a second language courses
- Help accessing education, work experience and employment

These services are crucial to aid survivors recovery and healing, particularly as the experience of modern slavery has significant negative impacts on survivors' mental and physical well-being<sup>3</sup>. Navigators were reported to work tirelessly to solve problems and find solutions, brokering relationships with other agencies. Navigators have smaller case loads than other support agencies, understand the complexities of modern slavery and can stay with a case for the duration of an investigation and a prosecution, including when someone is moved out of area.

*'She never got tired. She never give up. Incredibly she never stopped and she came back to me and said it has been 6 weeks I have been working in the silence to find you somebody.'* (Survivor, Surrey)

Interviewees also commented that Navigators were able to act fluidly and autonomously, getting access to certain types of support, quicker than other agencies. This was particularly pronounced with regards to accessing mental health support and therapy (sometimes in the native language of the survivor) but also in accommodation applications.

*'I put in four applications for accommodation and subsistence and the only one that got dealt with was the one where two of us were working together, the person, the victim, they've had a bit more like, they felt better as well that oh, I've not just got one person. I've got two people and and having that consistent person was really, really important'* (Stakeholder)

According to CMS data, 737 specific 'support needs' of the 279 survivors have been met through the Navigators' casework (2.6 on average per survivor).

These support needs range from securing safe accommodation, immigration advice, medical treatment or counselling to retrieving property, providing food and clothing to obtaining compensation. These support needs form part of an individual survivor's safety and support plans, which are agreed and co-created with the survivor and are specific to their current needs, vulnerabilities and aspirations.

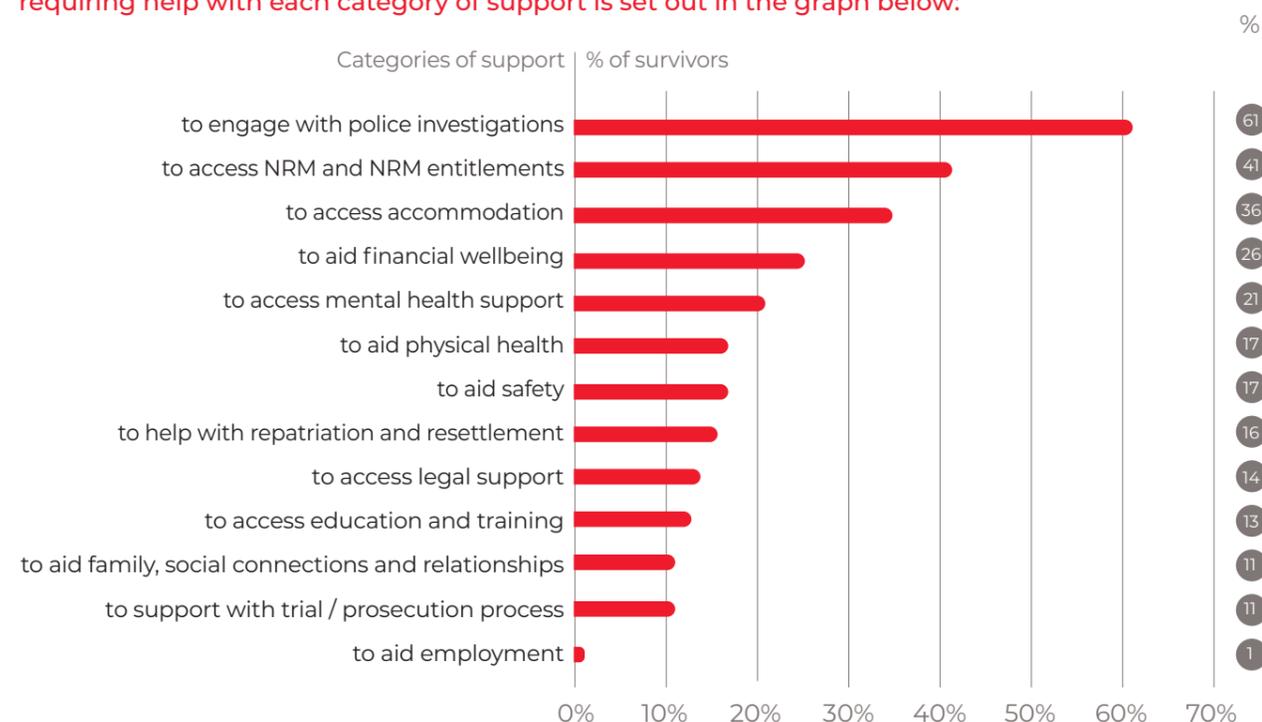
Safety and support plans were categorised for analysis, and the proportion of survivors requiring help with each category of support is set out in the graph below:

The most common support plans related to help with understanding and engaging with the police investigation and criminal justice process, including being supported to attend to give interviews, updates and explanations of policing decisions etc (62% survivors). A large minority (41%) needed help with accessing the NRM and entitlements under the NRM, and many (36%) needed help with accommodation - including sourcing accommodation, moving and resolving issues with their accommodation, before, during and post NRM support. Support with financial wellbeing was also a priority in many cases (26%), from immediate needs such as provision of food and clothing, to opening bank accounts and seeking compensation. By contrast only a small proportion of survivors required help with employment (1%), possibly because they were at a very early stage in their recovery journey.

Timely access to mental health support was extremely significant, given the level of trauma survivors had experienced. This was seen to be

<sup>3</sup> See for example, Ottisova L, Hemmings S, Howard L, Zimmerman C, Oram S. Prevalence and risk of violence and the mental, physical, and sexual health problems associated with human trafficking: an updated systematic review. *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences* 2016; 25(4):317–41. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S2045796016000135> PMID: 27066701.

Safety and support plans were categorised for analysis, and the proportion of survivors requiring help with each category of support is set out in the graph below:



important both before, during and after prosecution processes. Importantly, both stakeholders and survivors reported that Navigators worked seamlessly with other agencies, coordinating efforts and avoiding duplication.

*'We're making sure that what she is doing, I'm not doing the same thing or the things that I've done like she is doing, like she is aware the tasks that I'm doing so she's not doing the same and vice versa' (Stakeholder)*

As a result, stakeholders and survivors themselves reported positive changes in their well-being.

*'The Navigator travelled up to Sheffield, it was amazing to see her in person. I think it helped the client as well to know who I was speaking to on her behalf really. She's definitely gaining confidence. When I first spoke to her she would do nothing but cry and she just didn't really give much off but once meeting [the Navigator] and knowing that there are people that want to help*

*her, she's opened up like a flower. It's amazing to see' (Stakeholder)*

Several respondents in the survivor survey flagged the transformative nature of the holistic support provided. The fact that Navigators are willing to step in and provide assistance across a whole range of areas was identified as helping them to get their lives back on track: *"[The Navigator] has given me my life and self belief back. Nothing is too much trouble and whenever I have needed her she has been there. No one has ever helped me as much in my life."* (Survivor, Survey Respondent)

In order to assess survivors' recovery and reintegration, Justice and Care developed a 'survivor assessment tool' that uses a series of questions and observations to explore a survivor's wellbeing across six key domains of recovery: their mental and emotional health; physical health; financial stability; social connection; safety; and legal status. The survivor's needs assessment is in two parts -

one which asks for survivors' self-reported feelings and opinions and one which asks their Navigator about their professional observations of the survivor. This is to allow the survivor's voice to play a central role in the assessment of their recovery, and the triangulation of this information with the Navigator's own observations. The answers are translated into clearly defined 1-5 scaled scores to allow direct comparisons over time. Justice and Care found that the majority of survivors made progress over time across some or all of the six domains of recovery.

At the time of this evaluation a dataset of 84 repeat assessments was available and indicates that while survivors' wellbeing fluctuates, overall survivors and Navigators documented recovery progress over the course of their support; with 96% (n=81) of survivors self-reporting an improvement in at least one domain of recovery, and Navigators reporting an observed improvement in at least one domain in 99% (n=83) of cases.

In regards to the specific domains, this data revealed that 73% of survivors reported an improvement in their mental wellbeing, 65% an improvement in their economic situation and 64% in their physical health, with similar or higher rates of improvement observed by Navigators. This data supports the positive changes in wellbeing reported by survivors at interview. For those survivors reporting an increase in wellbeing, the

most substantial improvements were in the areas of safety, which rose from an average score of 3.0/5 at the baseline to 4.6/5 at the latest assessment, and in social support, which rose from 2.3/5 to 3.8/5, indicating that engagement with the Navigator has had a positive impact on many survivors' ability to feel secure, and to be part of a strong support network.

However, the path to improved wellbeing is not always straightforward and many survivors do report setbacks, with a substantial minority reporting decreased wellbeing across some domains in their repeat assessments. Most notably, 31% of survivors report worsening social connections (also observed by Navigators in 21% of cases) and 30% report a deterioration in physical health (observed by Navigators in 19% of cases).

Navigators were also instrumental in improving many police officers' understanding of modern slavery, the NRM, and its processes and in encouraging officers to provide the best evidence available as First Responders, which includes updating the referral as a criminal investigation progresses. By improving police practice and better identifying victims, this can have a significant impact on decisions made by the Single Competent Authority in terms of survivors receiving a positive or negative conclusive grounds decision and therefore accessing support.



*"He's done everything for me. Every bit of support I've needed. If it weren't for [the Navigator], I would have been lost honestly."*

## Objective 2: Establish greater trust between survivors, the police and the wider criminal justice process

Survivors, police and non-police stakeholders all independently commented on the level of distrust survivors have of authority and police. This, in part, was due to perpetrators reinforcing this narrative, but also due to previous experiences with police in home countries. Because of Navigators' relationship and partner arrangements with police, they were able to broker better relationships between police and survivors, allaying concerns and often being a friendly face at the point of rescue, throughout the criminal investigation and the prosecution (where applicable). Survivors described the Navigator as someone they could trust at a time of feeling overwhelmed and fearful.

*'She first person because every time many years I was disappointed. It's hard to trust someone. She first person in UK what, you know, what I need, what I think I can trust and I know she's very nice' (Survivor, Surrey)*

In the survivor survey, individuals highlighted the importance of being treated with compassion and the knock on effect this had on trusting others: *"He always believed in me and never judged me, he has also shown me that even official persons are genuine and caring in all stages of my ordeal."* (Survivor Survey Respondent).

Survivor recovery and healing, which is influenced by the direct support provided by the Navigator as well as access to services from various providers, also directly enables some survivors to engage with police and the criminal justice process. Being in safe spaces, having medical and psychological needs addressed and feeling cared about and cared for, establishes an environment where survivors, supported by the Navigator, are willing to aid the criminal investigation through providing witness statements, participating in Achieving Best Evidence interviews and, in some cases,

supporting a prosecution.

*'Without that extra engagement from [the Navigator] the victims would have withdrawn from the police or not re-engaged with police.'* (Police, Essex)

Police referred to the independence of the Navigator as being a key asset as through empathetic engagement and practical support Navigators built a relationship of trust, and this trust, over time, extended to their police partners.

*'[Navigator's] been there helping to gain her trust so that she could trust us.'* (Police, GMP)

*'So they need that trust, and to get that you need that time and we just don't have that time. And we will never be able to have the time that's required for them to trust us. So to have someone doing that, who is building that up and who is completely impartial, is I think just brilliant.'* (Police, Surrey)

Non-police stakeholders reflected on survivors' willingness to engage and work with the police as a result of Navigator involvement, particularly by consenting to be referred to the NRM or by providing intelligence to the police mostly in the form of an ABE interview. Some remarked that this had not been able to be achieved before (in the absence of Navigator input).

*'...they seem more willing and receptive to the idea of it than anyone else that I've helped. So everybody else that I've helped since I started has pretty much said no straight away, even though I've sort of come back to them about it a couple of times to give them a chance to think about it, offered them the same support, you know, in terms of being there with them. Explained why it might be a good idea. But*

*they've just not been interested at all'* (Stakeholder)

The Navigator therefore acts as a significant bridge between the survivor and the police, which is particularly important given how long criminal investigations last and the fear and anxiety experienced by survivors during a prosecution. The Navigator thus acts as 'the glue between support and the investigation'.

## Case Example: Improving victim-centred support

In Essex the Navigator was able to identify trends in relation to Vietnamese survivors, organise cultural competency training for officers and successfully foster relatively high engagement. Better understanding of how to engage with Vietnamese survivors has been shared with colleagues in order to improve practices across participating police forces.

This cultural competency was particularly important in relation to one case where the Navigator supported a Vietnamese male who

had entered the country in the back of a lorry, building trust and addressing basic needs including accommodation. As a result he divulged information which became crucial to the investigation and prosecution of the infamous 'Essex 39 Greys lorry case'.

## Case Study: Op Beret

With the support of the Manchester Navigator, two British survivors of cuckooing have engaged with police to ensure the conviction of those who exploited them and are now working towards rebuilding their lives.

Casey\* and Jess\* had been targeted by a number of exploiters who took advantage of their substance misuse issues, forcing their way into the victims' homes and using the accommodation as drug distribution sites, treating the two vulnerable women as slaves in their own homes. When the survivors were identified, the Navigator was immediately contacted by the Officer in Case (OIC) to provide survivor support, with the OIC emphasising that *"if this is ignored victims can walk away – will go back to incredible danger for themselves, as well as for police, we can lose an investigation"*. He additionally highlighted that the Navigator's intervention supporting the survivors' complex and ever shifting support needs freed up his time to focus on the investigation:

*"The Navigator's support for one victim's particular issues straight away probably saved me a week in my investigation."*

Casey and Jess provided evidence relating to two of the offenders which subsequently led to their arrest, and the identification of 12 additional victims. Casey successfully provided evidence in the prosecution of two offenders, with the support of the Navigator who aimed to make the experience as painless as possible over the 18 month

investigation and trial, guiding both survivors through the arduous process and many delays to the trial. Casey was praised by the prosecution for the calm, measured way she gave her evidence. According to the OIC, it was the Navigator's steadfast support that gave Casey the strength to testify:

*"She did fantastic in the box and gave a clear and honest account. And I do think a lot of her strength in giving that account, her confidence, was because of the continued support going in. She never thought she was on her own."*

Throughout the process, the Navigator supported both survivors with their immediate needs, including accessing the NRM, food bank referrals, emergency accommodation, healthcare and trauma counselling. Casey specifically sought support changing her lifestyle, avoiding substance misuse and sex work and addressing her medical needs. By the time of her final assessment she was reporting improved social connections and physical and mental health and was continuing to engage in rehabilitation and relevant support groups. She credits the Navigator for assisting her recovery:

*"He's done everything for me. Every bit of support I've needed. If it weren't for [the Navigator], I would have been lost honestly."*

The Navigator is also providing ongoing support to Jess, liaising with the local council and seeking to access suitable new housing for her.

Both survivors have said that they would not have remained on board with the police investigation but for Justice & Care being there for them, with Casey emphasising:

*"If I didn't have [the Navigator] I wouldn't have gone through with the case. I wouldn't have had the strength I had to do it because he was there as a prop, you know, he got me all the way through it. I couldn't have done it without him."*



**Objective 3: Foster greater engagement from survivors in information sharing, police investigations and, if relevant, prosecutions – strengthening efforts to bring exploiters to justice**

**Police Engagement (pre prosecution stage)**

There is strong evidence that survivors who have been supported by the Victim Navigator programme, and have built trusting relationships with them, also engage with the police. As a result of Navigators' support, survivors have been seen to be more willing to assist police investigations and prosecutions - with the hope that as a result of the survivors' evidence and testimony, more exploiters can be brought to justice.

*'I think the reason we now have his engagement is primarily because of the support [the Navigator] has given him....we now have an ABE video interview planned at the end of this month. So we have gone from someone who did not necessarily identify themselves as a victim. To someone who now sees he is a victim. He has been reunited with his son... which I think has helped; his son reported him missing six years ago. I think [the Navigator] has largely been instrumental in making that happen. So hopefully if we can get the evidence from him, we will give [the Navigator] a lot of credit for that, because he seems to have struck up a good relationship, a professional relationship with her, and he trusts her and you can see that he feels confident in what he has been told' (Police, MPS)*

To assess the extent to which they are achieving this aim, the Navigators recorded not only whether survivors were engaging with police, but also the extent to which they engaged. Together with the evaluators, Justice and Care developed a typology of police engagement and

translated these into a scale of six levels of survivor interaction with police: 0. no engagement 1. willing to take phone calls with police but not give information on record 2. providing intelligence or information on record 3. making a witness statement 4. providing an 'Achieving Best Evidence' (ABE) interview 5. willing to support a prosecution. These levels represent increasing levels of survivor willingness to engage, with the exception that witness statements and ABEs represent similar engagement levels but are helpful to delineate to understand how survivor vulnerability has been accommodated for in the evidence gathering process. Police engagement levels are tracked over time, with initial, highest and latest or final level of engagement being recorded for all survivors supported. This provides key insights into survivors' engagement journeys and identifies changes in overall engagement levels over time.

Data from the CMS revealed that at their latest or final engagement level, 92% of survivors<sup>4</sup> supported by a Navigator were willing to engage on some level with the police, while only 8% were not. The level of engagement survivors were willing to offer ranged from being willing just to take phone calls from police (8%), through providing intelligence or information to police (11%), providing a formal witness statement (10%) and providing an ABE interview (21%) up to supporting a prosecution (39%). An additional 3% of survivors were willing to engage but the police closed their case.

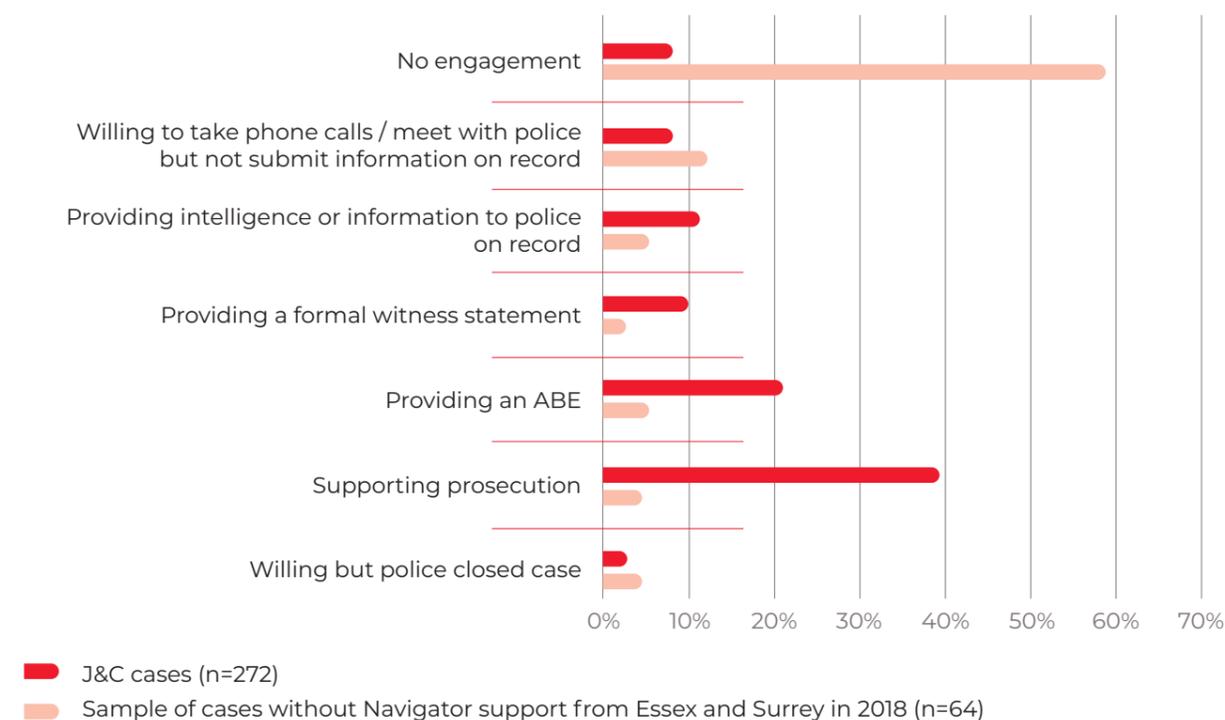
This compares very favourably with cases where Navigators were not involved. To benchmark

engagement without Navigators, modern slavery case files in Surrey and Essex Police from 2018 (immediately before Navigators were embedded in those forces) were analysed and the level of survivor engagement with police coded using the same likert scale. At their latest or final level of engagement, Navigator clients were significantly more likely to engage with supporting a prosecution (39%) than the sample of non-Navigator supported MSHT cases (8%) from Surrey and Essex (n=64). Almost three quarters (73%) of Navigator supported clients were providing one of the top three categories of police engagement (or willing to support prosecution but police closed the case), compared to less than one-third (28%) of non-Navigator supported survivors in Surrey and Essex at the latest measure or by case closure. Only 8% of Navigator clients were providing no engagement at the latest stage of engagement or at case closure, compared to 56% of non-Navigator supported survivors in Essex

and Surrey - meaning that survivors without a Navigator were 7 times less likely to engage with police. Put another way, 92% of survivors with a Navigator engaged on some level with police, compared to just 44% of survivors without a Navigator.

It is also worth noting that the level of engagement for almost a third (31%) of survivors supported by Navigators increased over time, compared to only 5% of the Essex and Surrey cases examined. Conversely, while only 12% of Navigator supported clients reduced their level of police engagement over time, 44% of the cases without Navigator support presented a reduced level of engagement over time. These quantitative findings corroborate the qualitative data from police officers who refer to the important role Navigators have played in acting as a bridge between them and survivors of modern slavery.

**Latest or final level of survivor engagement with police**



<sup>4</sup> Of 272 support plan cases where police engagement level was recorded

Due to the length of time taken to achieve a prosecution, there was ample time to research and evaluate what is involved in getting to trial, the benefits of supporting a survivor (regardless of a trial or prosecution outcome) and the mechanisms behind this. Participants raised the fact that 'success' was not just about prosecutions. Rather, as is picked up by some earlier objectives, having someone who cares and supports the survivors, removes them from a place of harm to a place of safety and survivors achieving a greater sense of well-being are other significant measures of success.

Willingness to engage with police was a major success factor in itself. This engagement was in part because survivors were willing to work with Navigators, but police were also reported to be better equipped to engage with survivors. This is through training opportunities, Navigators being on site at the point of rescue and being present in police forces and providing strategic advice. Police are being educated to not just catch perpetrators, but to operate in a victim-centred way.

Survivors and stakeholders commented on the invaluable nature of having someone to speak to in order to get updates on the police investigation, and to answer questions and concerns. Navigators made sure engagement was not just initiated but also maintained and interviewees reflected that in the absence of Navigators they felt ill informed and disconnected from the case. This link to police differentiated Navigators from other support services in the sector.

*'One police officer would change department... and a new person comes...we get dropped out, because we wouldn't know that there has been a department change...they would not liaise with us, so it helps because if there is that*

*one dedicated person...who is not changing obviously they keep things together for this victim' (Stakeholder)*

There are several ways that Navigators have helped foster greater engagement from survivors in sharing information with police and in particular with supporting a prosecution. The trust that is established between the Navigator and the survivor, provides a setting in which Navigators can display their trust in the police and operate as a conduit for information from the police about developments in the case or as a response to survivors' queries. They can also convey information survivors might be willing to share but in this indirect manner. Navigators' positive relationship with the police helps to overcome survivors' mistrust and as a result they may decide to engage with the police around a criminal investigation.

Navigators noted that over time, survivors may be more willing to engage with police and to seek justice because they are in a more stable and safe environment and have the ability to process and share information. In just under half (44%) of Support Plan cases, the survivor's level of engagement with police changed over time, with 72% of these survivors increasing their level of engagement, and 28% (of those 44%) decreasing their level of engagement over the course of the investigation or prosecution. In those cases that experienced a change in engagement level, the average engagement score went from 2.71 in the first instance to 3.68 in the latest measurement occasion, a statistically significant 0.97 increase<sup>5</sup>. Particularly marked is the rise in the proportion of cases that fall under level 5 (supporting a prosecution), which went from 8.94% in the first measurement occasion to 50.41% at the latest occasion.

Where survivors increased their level of engagement over time, Navigator case notes indicate that some survivors were initially 'timid', 'nervous' or 'fearful' but that following their explanation of the Navigator role and sustained engagement with the survivors, they were more likely to talk to the police. In other cases, they flagged that survivors involved in criminal exploitation were initially being treated as suspects but after they were recognised as victims of MSHT, they were more likely to engage with police.

*"[The survivor was] initially fearful of police engagement. A multi-stage intro and explanation process resulted in her being the first of potential victims to agree to ABE. She has since helped others feel more comfortable and agree." ( Navigator, Surrey)*

Moreover maintaining regular empathetic contact, and organising support including counselling or substance abuse treatment and access to resources like English classes, were seen by OICs and Navigators as improving the likelihood that survivors would stay engaged in a case. It might also help survivors become a stronger person and thus a stronger witness should the case go to court.

*'I introduced the concept of counselling to her, which initially she absolutely had quite a bias against, and then decided she did need something. And that really helped her to start to recover, start to process things and be more willing to seek justice basically, as part of her recovery. So eventually, she started sharing more information that kind of added to what the police already knew.... her second [ABE] interview was a lot stronger than her first one. She'd had a lot of counselling at that point. And also English lessons that I'd arranged for her. So just all of these little things that are happening*

*in the background that are building up her self-esteem and helping her to process information ...and deal with PTSD and everything else. That is making her a stronger witness as well as just a stronger person.'* (Navigator, Surrey)

*'...if their life is in a better state or if they feel they are getting support in some way then they're more likely to stay engaged in the case, in the court process.'* (Police, MPS)

In the small number of cases that saw a decrease in survivor engagement with police over time, Navigator case notes cite survivors' fears for their own and their families safety, and the trauma or shame of engaging in the investigation or prosecution as key factors for disengagement. A number of additional survivors were reported as going missing.

*"Victim initially engaged with police at point of identification but has since had reservations about proceeding any further in fear of repercussions for family members and their safety in Pakistan" (Navigator, West Yorkshire)*

*"Victim later changed his mind, stating that he worries for the safety of his family who live near the suspect, and thus cannot support a prosecution at this time." (Navigator, Surrey)*



<sup>5</sup> p-value of a two-sided Wilcoxon signed-rank test: 0.00

### Investigative Outcomes

Survivor engagement with police has significant investigative consequences. As a result of improved engagement with police, investigative and criminal justice outcomes are improved

As already detailed, in the case analysis 44% of survivors without a Navigator engaged with police compared to 92% survivors with a Navigator engaging with police. To understand the impact of survivor engagement on investigations, Navigators recorded in the case management system when the intelligence or evidence shared by an engaging survivor in their caseload directly led to further investigative outcomes. Analysis of this data revealed that the information shared by survivors to the police played a key role in facilitating progress in the investigations, including directly leading to 214 suspects being

identified and 137 arrests. The infographic below details the results of survivor engagement with police in 234 Navigator supported cases.

A regression analysis of CMS data was conducted to examine the relationship between levels of engagement with police and investigative outcomes.

More than half (56%) of all cases where survivors had some level of engagement with police led to additional investigative outcomes, including the identification of suspects (50%), locations of interest (37%) and further victims (14%), as well as arrests (30%) and charges (10%).

There is a strong correlation between higher levels of engagement and the likelihood of investigative outcomes, with only 22% of cases where the survivor engaged at the lower level of

our scale (willing to take phone calls/ meet with police but not submit information on record) leading to any investigative outcome, compared to 78% of cases where the survivor provided a witness statement, and 73% of cases where the survivor was supporting prosecution.

Where a survivor was willing to support a prosecution or provide a witness statement, their engagement with police was strongly and systematically correlated with more arrests and more charges being made, compared with those engaging at the lowest level of being willing to meet with police but not submit information on record. Providing an ABE is also significantly correlated with more arrests. By contrast the lowest levels of engagement were not strongly correlated with increased investigative outcomes - with providing intelligence or information not associated with increased investigative outcomes in any statistically significant way. This helps to illustrate the importance of higher levels of survivor engagement in driving outcomes in police modern slavery investigations, and makes the success of the Navigator programme in supporting 70% of survivors to engage at the highest engagement levels (providing a witness statement, ABE or supporting a prosecution) all the more significant.

Experience of a trial was also included in the survivor survey, where respondents highlighted the importance of being given a voice, and the value of being provided up to date information with police investigations and trials: *"I was able to understand the process better and made to feel safe during the whole process."* (Survivor, Survey Respondent).

### Impact of trial on mental well-being

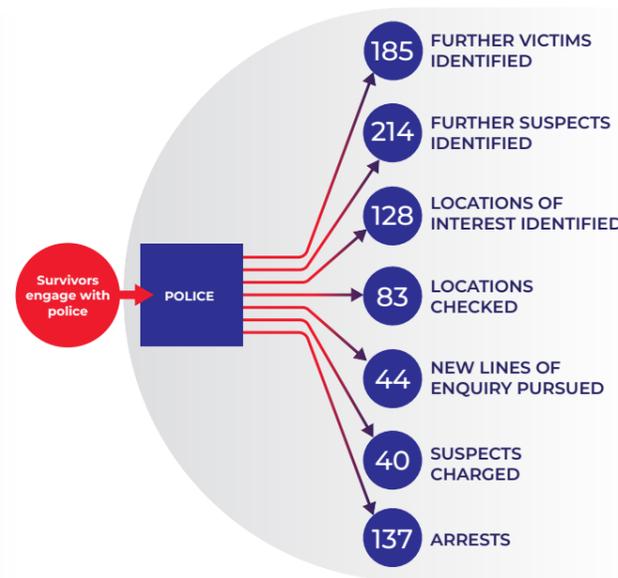
The survivors that were interviewed about their trial experiences, discussed the stress that a trial induced. In each case that went to trial, there had been a significant build up, likely with delays (compounded by the pandemic). In one case the trial was delayed by a year. Other cases had last minute changes which were described as particularly distressing and disorientating for the survivors and witnesses involved. At times this seemed to cater to the defendant's needs, which was even more difficult for the survivors to come to terms with. In relation to this, survivors discussed the vital importance of having the Navigator on this journey with them. Each survivor interviewed indicated that, without the Navigator, they felt they would have been unable to go ahead with the prosecution and trial; this related to getting to this point in the first place, as well as continuing with the trial once it began.

Analysis of 234 cases supported by Navigators April 2020 - June 2022 showed:

Without Navigators, only an estimated 4 in 10 survivors engage with police investigations



With Navigators, 9 in 10 survivors engage with police investigations



### Experiences of the Prosecution Process

At the time of the interim evaluation there had not yet been any prosecutions. However at the time of the final evaluation, there had been 10 cases which have gone to trial and a further 9 prosecutions pending, which involve survivors supported by Navigators. Interviews have been conducted with four survivors who had been through the court process as well as with 4 Navigators and 7 OICs involved in the prosecutions. In addition, Justice and Care invited an independent observer to observe the court process to document and consider the treatment of survivors throughout.

Navigators described that for survivors, engaging with police about their case, preparation for a prosecution and engaging in a trial can all act as a trigger resulting in insomnia, nightmares, flashbacks and other negative mental health consequences. As a result, Navigators gave examples where they had been able to offer additional support and counselling to help survivors deal with their anxiety and fears whilst going through the trial process. Survivors noted the value in having a consistent person with them along the journey; from rescue to trial.

*'It's just nice to have same person which understand you and which know the how hard for you this is' (Survivor, Surrey)*

Navigators also responded to the personal cost of delays, including a survivor feeling 'petrified that she was going to lose her job', and the deteriorating health and hospitalisation of another.

*'One of the victims here who was summoned, the stress has really affected him. And he's not eating properly. He's been discharged [from hospital], but he's not able to walk at the moment. So he's having further tests to work out why but they think it might be because he's lost so much weight through stress of the trial that it's affecting his limbs.' (Navigator, MPS)*

Both Navigators and OICs stated that the criminal justice system does not seem to recognise the difficulties imposed on survivors as the system is not geared around their needs. Therefore, Navigators may have been the only professional to validate and understand the impact of the process on survivors.

*'The biggest thing for me is this whole delaying tactics that keeps coming up in all of our trials. And the effect that that has on our girls, for as much as you say to someone, right, you're probably going to be giving evidence next Tuesday. And it ends up being the Friday or whenever, that's really hard, and nobody seems to give a damn about the victims when that happens. It's a little bit like, you know, we fit in around what the judge is doing, what the barristers are doing ... a jury member's dentist appointment or whatever, with absolutely no thought to the effect that that has on the victim.' ( Navigator, MPS)*

### Pre trial measures

In preparation for trial, Navigators were able to ensure that survivors could visit the court in advance, meet with prosecution barristers and advocate for protective measures to be put in place. This was said to help with the anxiety of the process, again, keeping the survivor engaged and motivated to participate.

*'[Navigator] took me down the week before to show me the courtroom and where I'd be stood and the screen and everything. And then when we got there, and [the Navigator] had a word with the guy who came down to see me, the guy who was putting them away, they said that they were gonna do it via video link so that I wasn't put on the spot (Survivor, Manchester)*

As well as providing regular contact with the survivors, OICs and Navigators indicated that Navigators took responsibility for much of the logistical arrangements required before and during a trial. This encompassed liaising with Witness Care in order to organise pre-trial visits to courts, picking up and taking witnesses to court, ensuring they were kept safe and away from defendants and their families, supporting them when there were delays, being with them while they waited to provide testimony and helping them process their experiences which often made them feel bad.

*'[Navigator] linked in with CPS witness services side and played a major part in [obtaining video link] and he took a lot of pressure off of me as I was trying to get the results stuff ... It was the logistics of it, making sure of the timing, where she was, that she understood it, and ... helped her view the ABE before the trial, ...and he was there supporting her.' (Police, GMP)*

*'She sorts out the logistics of how victims go to court, who goes with them, what they might need in terms of victim support... She has that*

*relationship with them. And they trust her.' (Police, MPS)*

### Ability to give witness testimony

Officers in the Case viewed the Navigators as key to keeping survivors on board over the long periods of time, sometimes years, between identification as a victim through to a trial. They referred to the care and support Navigators offer, the relationship of trust they build with survivors, as well as feelings of hope. OICs also made reference to the importance of survivor testimony in terms of bringing modern slavery charges and in helping secure a modern slavery conviction.

*'We depended on her testimony, to be able to get the modern slavery charges. Anything else, you can prove finances, you can prove movement. But to get the modern slavery, you need that element of someone's testimony to say how they were coerced, how they were vulnerable, you know, and ... the human costs, in the actual trial in the courtroom.' (Navigator, Surrey)*

*'He makes a huge difference, he really does. I am pretty sure without him we wouldn't have victims on board with prosecutions but also they would probably still be where they are [in exploitation]. ... He gives people hope.' (Police, West Yorkshire)*

*'And I can't say enough about consistency of care. With [survivor], from day 1, he was there saying I'm here to help you and all the way through that journey, he's never asked anything from them. He's never said I need this statement. I'm [OIC] the one doing all of that. All he's ever done is say, if you need help ring me. All he's done is offer support. So when he's at court, it's very powerful if he says, you need to do this but I'll help you. They trust him. And that's only because they've had that time, that relationship over those months, where all he's done is given them support.' (Police, GMP)*

*'Without [the Navigator] we wouldn't have had enough time to do the investigation that needed to be completed because the victim management of this case is particularly difficult. Without [the Navigator] I think there was a 90% chance we would have lost either one or more of the victims as witnesses and it was amazing that we retained all of them.' (Police, MPS)*

Navigators also identified the importance of their engagement with keeping the survivors on board, as exemplified by the following statement:

*'Through the two plus years of waiting for that trial, the ups and downs and the fear that she had of the traffickers, she would have completely disengaged from and walked away from that investigation, so many times. And also mental health issues, she was very suicidal kind of in, throughout the last two years. So there's a lot that, you know, we're not just facilitating that information flow and that trust building, but we are keeping the key to the whole prosecution alive and well and strong enough to be able to stand in court.' (Navigator, Surrey)*

### Treatment in court

Through support from the Navigators, improved physical and emotional well-being enabled survivors to be stronger witnesses in a trial, which in the British system means they can be subject to questioning about their evidence and also about their character. A number of survivors who were interviewed for the evaluation, and had been through the prosecution process described how they were 'talked down to' and 'torn apart' by the defendant's barristers. Others reported feeling 'embarrassed' and 'accused of lying, 'being a bad person' or engaging with the police in return for 'help with their immigration status'. Survivors therefore described the importance of having the Navigator there to prepare them for this possibility, advocate on their behalf, be a familiar face in court

and support them afterwards. They explained this was absolutely vital in giving them the strength to continue with the process. This was especially important in cases where, to all other intents and purposes, survivors may have moved on with their life and the trial was preventing them from fully embracing a new, positive future. Some cases also had media coverage attached to them, and survivors described how difficult it was to read this content.

*'Because I'm a user...I was treated like a piece of shit on their foot. Even the prosecutors were, is it the prosecutors that work for the defendants? They was trying to say that I wouldn't have, I didn't know the difference between a plate of food and a plate of drugs. They proper put me down and all the way through it he kind of kept me mind together. The lawyers, they were trying to make out that I was too full of drugs to know what was going on. But [the Navigator] had prepped me for this, before I went in' (Survivor, Manchester)*

Navigators' approach to survivors, treating them with dignity and as valued human beings, was a key element in helping survivors to challenge the way they were often undermined or depicted as unworthy by defence barristers. Their recovery enabled them to provide testimony of the exploitation and abuse they experienced at the hands of defendants. For example, a survivor of cuckooing was described as:

*'fantastic in the box. She was an absolute tiger. Held her own account. The defence barrister soon backed off ... She's very strong willed, and gave a clear and honest account. And I do think a lot of her strength in giving that account, her confidence was because of the continued support going in. She never thought she was on her own. She was always happy going in there and giving that good account.' (Police, GMP)*

Based on their experiences of recent modern slavery trials, both OICs and Navigators reported on the positive feelings emanating from survivors who had their day in court, and with guilty pleas or convictions felt vindicated because they were believed.

*'She stood up and she was questioned, horrendously, but they believed her. And I think that's massively helped her to know that this group of strangers believed what she said. And I think that's helping her move on a lot.'* (Navigator, MPS)

Prosecuting modern slavery cases can be viewed through the lens of societal outcomes where a conviction acts as a deterrent and can prevent future harm. From a survivor perspective a prosecution reflects achieving justice for a crime committed against them. Central to both outcomes is survivors' testimony. From an OIC perspective, Navigators have provided the support and care survivors need to remain engaged in the time taken to get to a prosecution, as well as throughout the court process itself. Navigators therefore play a key role in helping to achieve criminal justice and preventing future harm.

*'...our drive is to bring these people to justice. ... It's about preventing harm. Preventing harm doesn't just mean arresting someone. Preventing harm is arresting someone and prosecution. That goes hand in hand. ...where long term safeguarding is achieved. Without victim engagement we can't achieve that.'* (Police, MPS)

## Case Study: Op Rossville

Since February 2021, the two London MPS Navigators have been supporting young female survivors of grooming and sexual exploitation, some of whom were children at the time of the abuse, to continue testifying through to the conclusion of the trial of the accused. Thanks to the bravery of the survivors and the support of the Navigators, two offenders were convicted on 44 counts, including rape, grooming, inciting the sexual exploitation of a child, paying for sexual services from a child and producing and distributing indecent images.

Emphasising the importance of their timing in becoming involved with this case, one Navigator said: *"Within that last year on the build up to the trial, their needs were getting greater. And also the pressures on the OIC were getting greater as well"*. Until this point, survivor engagement had been led by the OIC, who highlighted that given the number of survivors, their age, vulnerability and distribution around the country, keeping them updated and supported during the case was highly demanding. She expressed huge relief that this could be taken over by the Navigators: *"They really helped. It meant I could focus more on everything that the barristers wanted me to do to get the case trial ready and not have to worry so much about that regular contact with the victims."*

The primary role played by the Navigators in support of the trial was taking the survivors through the legal system and providing reassurance that an end was in sight, despite the numerous delays that allowed the trial to drag on. The Navigators arranged pre-

trial court visits and video-calls with court victim-care personnel so that survivors would know what to expect during the trial, ensuring that the individual needs of each survivor were accommodated. The OIC noted the importance of having the Navigators providing moral and logistical support to the survivors in court: *"The victims had that cushion of [the Navigators] preparing them, making sure they knew what was happening, being there. I think it made the victims feel that they were the most important person there because the problem with the court process is that they don't feel like that."*

Due to the defendant pleading guilty to a number of charges, only two survivors were required to provide evidence in the trial, despite all being willing to testify. The Navigators highlighted that it was in a way therapeutic for the survivors who had a chance to testify, offering them a sense of closure: *"I think that massively helped [the survivor] to know that this group of strangers believed what she said. And I think that's helping her move on a lot"*.

Throughout this period, the Navigators have been looking after the complex support needs of the survivors in this case, with some requiring significant aftercare. All survivors were supported to receive intensive counselling in the pre-trial period, with some receiving additional support with access to accommodation, education and healthcare. Most are now well-settled and ready to move on with their lives. One survivor shared: *"Thank you for being so patient with me and for always being there when I messaged you."*

*I really felt for the first time that someone cared and did what they said they would do to support me. You have helped me, for the first time in my life, feel proud of myself”.*

Two survivors are still receiving active support with their mental health needs and navigating social services, while two more are being supported with ongoing criminal settlement claims. Navigators recognise the

need to continue offering support where it's needed but also to empower the survivors to move on with their lives: *“Some will drop off, you know, won't need us and, and then it's important that we do move away, because we are that constant reminder of, of what they've been through. But others yeah, I think it could be that for, for a little while yet, we're still there supporting them.”*

**You have helped me, for the first time in my life, feel proud of myself”.**

**(Survivor)**

#### **Objective 4: Free up police time and resource to focus on criminal investigations and wider organised crime groups, by managing day-to-day police contact with survivors**

Evidence from police officers in all force areas indicates that freeing up police time was a distinguishing feature of the Victim Navigator programme. Detectives' large workloads means they cannot provide the level of contact with survivors that they want or require. Navigators took on responsibilities related to survivor support, ensuring survivors' needs were met, and had regular contact with survivors in relation to their recovery and to keep them engaged with or updated about the criminal investigation. This meant that police officers were able to focus on the criminal investigation and make best use of their expertise and skill set, whilst knowing the survivor was supported.

*“We are dealing with really vulnerable victims here ...I have dealt with vulnerable victims and that distracts you so much, and rightly so, but having [the Navigator's] assistance affords us more time on the investigation side and [the Navigator] gives them an absolutely sterling service. It is amazing. And she does a better job than we could do or are able to do. She has time so having a dedicated Navigator frees us up to do suspect [related] things and other enquiries. It really does.” (Police, Essex)*

In some cases maintaining contact with a survivor required Navigators to chase NGOs providing the support to the survivor, as well as the individual case worker who can change over the life of an investigation. These can be time-consuming activities and if left to police, contact with survivors may be lost. This would mean the officer would lose the person who has information that could aid an investigation.

*“The main thing that [the Navigator] has helped with is the victim side because that is extremely time consuming in our role, in any investigation, but what I am finding with human trafficking and modern slavery they require more time and attention than we can probably give them. ... I don't have time to keep chasing and building up that relationship with their case worker or key worker but [the Navigator] was able to keep up that correspondence, chase it, and find out her care worker had changed. And to be honest... given other jobs and time constraints that's something I wouldn't have been able to do. So the fact that [the Navigator] was able to keep [up] that communication massively helped. And she changed her mind [about doing an interview] and unfortunately changed it again, but, for example, we wouldn't have gotten that far without [the Navigator].” (Police, Surrey)*

Moreover, police officers welcomed the role Navigators played in explaining to survivors the support options available to them (rather than officers), including the NRM, which allowed survivors to make a more informed choice, thereby improving the survivor's experience. Police often did not have the time nor understanding of the NRM to do it justice, this was another responsibility Navigators could take on for police.

There are significant challenges facing police officers involved in modern slavery cases. These include engagement in multiple criminal investigations at the same time as seeking to maintain contact and support for survivors who have complex needs. A Navigator changes this dynamic as it frees police officers to focus

on their role of pursuing a criminal investigation and prosecution, as the Navigator takes on board the important task of survivor engagement and support.

*'As a very busy OIC investigating multiple complex cases, it is quite difficult to maintain contact with victims because not only are you balancing investigative needs, you're also involved in other things as well and your day is always quite full. It's not easy to keep them updated and to keep their needs met and to keep assessing those risks. ...Having [the Navigator] on board changed that landscape hugely. She became the single contact point between the investigation and some of our victims. ...Keeping that constant rapport with the victims was key in getting our victims to court. She had direct entry into our investigation which was really helpful to her as we could respond to her and we knew what she was doing.'* (Police, MPS)

OICs who worked with Navigators identified a number of positive outcomes arising from their partnership in a modern slavery case. A significant outcome from the police perspective, was that the Navigator role allowed a transfer of responsibility for the care and support of survivor of modern slavery which is often intense and time consuming given the trauma they have experienced. Moreover, their role permitted them to be available to survivors and to keep in touch as and when needed, while police officers were juggling many cases and did not have the time to be in contact as regularly, and thus to provide reassurance, to listen to them, to up-date them on the case and to offer practical support. Navigators who take on board the needs and feelings of very vulnerable survivors benefit the police as well as the survivors.

*'Again with some of the victims, they would contact me at various times of the day and night, with issues. It wouldn't be anything I*

*could do anything about but they just wanted someone to talk to really and the Victim Navigator has been able to take that on, and that is a huge thing for me. Which meant I did not have to worry about that kind of contact. So all that stuff that wasn't really related to the case, was more related to their everyday lives, and the way they were feeling and what was going on in their lives. And [Navigators] have been able to offer practical support that I could never offer them, in terms, you know if they are struggling one week financially, they could sort out some help for them or help them find a job or give them some advice about how to help them move their life along. Which is so helpful for them. I can't do that, that's not my role. So to be able to utilise people who can do that, is amazing.'* (Police, MPS)

Navigators freed police officers to focus on the criminal investigation and further down the line to focus on the prosecution. OICs indicated how the Navigator and their contact with survivors, meant they were able to concentrate on the time consuming tasks involved in preparing for a trial, as exemplified below.

*[Having the Navigators on board] meant I could focus more on everything that the barristers wanted me to do to get the case trial ready and not have to worry so much about that regular contact with the victims. ... because for victims who are so young and vulnerable, it's not just contacting them to give an update.'* (Police, MPS)

As noted above and significantly for the police, Navigators taking responsibility for court and trial logistics meant the OIC did not have to arrange for police officers to undertake these tasks. This also freed up police time. Moreover, OICs indicated this would likely be inferior support, if provided internally, as they could not count on the availability of a consistent group of officers.

Navigators also ensured OICs were aware that survivors had arrived in court, appraised them of survivors' feelings or concerns, and freed the police team to have light touch engagement with the survivors so they could focus their attention on aiding the prosecutor.

*"The victims had that cushion of [the Navigators] preparing them, making sure they knew what was happening, being there. Their focus was on the victims in the court whereas my focus couldn't be solely on the victims in court. So [the Navigator] would text to say we've just arrived, so I could leave the court for 10 minutes to see them in Witness Service to just say hello to them but if they [the Navigators] hadn't been there to do that I would have needed to arrange to be there somehow. So for the victims, they had that person there to really support them in such a huge way.'* (Police, MPS)

The emotional support that Navigators provided to survivors who were participating in an ABE, reviewing an ABE, giving pre-trial evidence or providing testimony in court freed police officers from undertaking these tasks.

*'I sat in the camera room, which is what we often do, while they did the interview. Any time she gets emotional, or she needs a break, you know, then I'm able to sit out with her and like, decompress.'* (Navigator, Surrey)

Similarly, and as noted in the section above, Navigators also responded to the psychological impacts on survivors which arose from giving evidence, facing defence barristers and the judge, and in some cases defendants. Navigators talked about the importance of 'being there' for the survivor to provide reassurance, to help calm their nerves before giving testimony and to be available in person and by phone after testimony when survivors needed to process

what had happened and how they have been treated. Navigators freed police from much of this emotional work.

*'I'm just there to listen and help her ... And you know, you don't ever want to say, Oh, you were amazing, and like, all of it's gonna be great. You're just saying you are doing the very best you can do, you've done brilliantly, keep it up, you're almost there. Um, there's a lot more to this investigation than just your testimony, and that you're not the only witness. So a lot of it is reassuring her that the entire focus, and the whole, like, case doesn't rest just on her. It does, technically for her modern slavery charge. But there's so much more.'* (Navigator, Surrey)

Once a trial is complete, police have to disengage from survivors which can be difficult as they have established a relationship with them, often over the long period of the investigation and prosecution, and understand survivors ongoing vulnerabilities. OICs indicated that planning how to take a step back was much easier with having the Navigators on board as survivors would not experience an abrupt end in their support.

*'You create a rapport with victims but once a case is over you have to take a step back, that would have been a lot more difficult for me to do, if I hadn't had [the Navigators] take my place a bit and to be a conduit between us for a bit and then for me to begin to gradually take more of a step back. And then they can do that, but a bit later so it's more staggered.'* (Police, MPS)

Moreover, OICs valued the continued role Navigators would play in helping survivors to move on after the trial.



*'It's not over for them really. They've often still got to live with it. They're often still dealing with the trauma and everything and their lives are still disrupted. Unfortunately I've got the next job that I have to see through but [the Navigator's] got a bit of space and continue to provide that support.'* (Police, GMP)

It is clear from the testimony of police officers in both strategic and operational roles that Navigators have played a significant role in enabling officers to focus on the criminal investigation and prosecution and in keeping survivors' engaged. As a result, the interviews indicated they have improved a force's response to modern slavery cases and increased the likelihood of a modern slavery prosecution and conviction.

**"[The Navigator] gives them absolutely sterling service. It is amazing. And she does a better job than we could do or are able to do"**  
(Police, Essex)

### Objective 5: Build relationships, broker support and maintain contact for survivors in source countries

A number of survivors who came to the attention of police forces and who received support from the Navigators expressed an interest in returning home. Justice and Care developed a Fast Track Voluntary and Assisted Return package which offered survivors a safe and supported return to their home countries. Navigators played a key role in ensuring survivors were safeguarded and had access to temporary safe accommodation and support services while they made arrangements for their repatriation. For some survivors this required obtaining the necessary travel documents as well as organising flights and, during the coronavirus pandemic, ensuring that all procedures related to covid were completed. Another significant feature of the repatriation process was the way in which Navigators, with the help of Justice and Care sought local contacts in countries of origin who would be able to meet the survivor on arrival and ensure their safety and act as a source of support.

Working with survivors, Navigators identified the following needs that have to be addressed post identification and then upon arrival in their home country.

#### Survivor's needs immediately post identification were:

- Safe accommodation
- Immediate health support for significant health issues
- Basic needs such as food, clothes, a mobile phone and toiletries
- Language support
- Identity document support such as reporting existing documents as stolen by the criminals who exploited them and receiving new travel documents

- Risk assessments in the source country
- Transport within and outside the country
- Coordination of support services upon arrival
- A month's equivalent of financial support

#### Upon arrival:

- Transport to safe accommodation and within country
- Safe accommodation
- Reissuing of ID/birth certificate/passport, if applicable
- Bank account and financial footprint
- Access to social support and benefits
- Employment support
- Health support (GP, Mental Health and family)

To date, Navigators have helped repatriate 32 survivors to seven different countries: Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Albania, Brazil, Mexico and Indonesia. 19 (60%) returned to Romania and 4 to Hungary and 4 to Bulgaria. The development of a Justice and Care Victim Navigator programme in Romania has helped facilitate the return of Romanian survivors, and in a number of cases provided ongoing support to them and their family, helped them secure education or employment and stay engaged with a UK criminal investigation.

There is evidence that Navigator support alongside the support provided by local organisations has aided repatriated survivors' reintegration and helped them towards goals of accessing education or employment, improving their mental health or aiding their families. Nevertheless, having facilitated a safe return, some survivors disengaged with Navigators or local organisations so there is no information about changes in their situation. However Justice and Care was able

to collect information in relation to a number of returnees which highlight a number of different outcomes. Navigators and/or local organisations including Justice and Care Romania have been helping 14 repatriated survivors to look for or access education or employment. In a smaller number of cases they have helped meet basic needs for the survivor and their family, gain access to therapy, and obtain legal assistance. The data indicates that about half of all survivors continue to benefit from ongoing support to aid their recovery and reintegration which is likely to reduce their risk of being re-trafficked. There are also positive criminal justice outcomes, with 12 repatriated survivors continuing to support an ongoing criminal investigation in the UK, 2 who continue to support a prosecution although their cases have been closed, and 2 whose evidence has

helped to facilitate a Joint Investigation between Scotland and Hungary.

As discussed there is evidence that the objective to build relationships, broker support and maintain contact for survivors in source countries has been partially achieved. Navigators have reached out to organisations in countries to aid repatriation in order to broker a safe return and to provide support to survivors on return. Not all survivors have accepted such support and some have disengaged. Nevertheless relationships have been developed particularly in Romania and contact is being maintained with a number of survivors, especially those continuing to support a prosecution.

### Case Example: Assisting repatriation

In February 2021, our Navigator was alerted by police that eight Romanian victims of modern slavery had been found in a garage behind a car wash. The youngest survivor, a 15 year old boy, had been foraging for food behind some local shops when police officers spoke to him and realised that he was trying to find food for others. The boy led the officers to a garage, where five men and two women were found living in horrendous conditions, with no sanitation, heating or personal belongings. The victims were rescued and taken to the local police station, but refused to enter the NRM as they were determined to return home as soon as possible. The Navigator sourced clean clothes, basic essentials and

emergency accommodation for the survivors, and supported them to make statements as they engaged with the criminal investigation. A week later, having provided the survivors with the wrap-around care they needed, the Navigator arranged for them to have COVID-19 tests, booked their flights, helped them to safely return home to Romania and connected them with local support services from the moment of arrival. The case remains open and the Navigator is still in contact with the eight survivors, leading to intelligence that has enabled the police to identify and arrest key suspects in the case.

## Objective 6: Learn lessons for UK Government and national police/NGO strategies, as well as prove a model that could be promoted and spread

Beyond the programme's immediate caseload, Justice and Care intended that the Navigator programme would generate lessons and insights for the investigation of modern slavery and the care of survivors both on a local and national scale, to enable the programme to have systemic impact. To facilitate this, Navigators were encouraged to document and discuss systemic gaps and challenges they encountered on a monthly basis and to collaborate with others to produce solutions and resources wherever possible. The Navigators individually and collectively worked to identify and address numerous issues, examples of which are outlined below:

### Local input:

On a local level, Navigators identified a lack of safe accommodation for survivors immediately post-rescue and before they entered the NRM as a serious shortcoming in service provision and a threat to the safety and engagement of survivors. Navigators in West Yorkshire and Surrey were able to work with local partners to establish appropriate local pre-NRM accommodation provision in response to this need. In Kent, Justice and Care helped get the custody release procedure altered so that modern slavery was recognised as a vulnerability and therefore taken into account when someone was released from custody. Navigators were invited to contribute to police force and local authority strategies, including a round table discussing the Metropolitan Police Force's modern slavery strategy with senior leads and providing advice, support and resources to Leeds City Council Senior Executives to inform their tactical template for Modern Slavery Victim Rest and Recovery arrangements across the city. Navigators have also played a significant role in devising new resources to aid the police response,

for example Justice and Care's 'Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking: Identifying a Potential Victim, and Initial Response' and 'Modern Slavery/ Human Trafficking/Clandestine Entry' guidelines produced and provided to all police vehicles in Essex and Kent. Moreover, in Surrey the Navigator helped push modern slavery up the police force agenda and it has led to additional staffing with a modern slavery remit.

Problems identified by Navigators in relation to decision-making by the Crown Prosecution Services has led Justice and Care to take action. In one force area the Navigator collected evidence documenting the variable treatment of individuals in County Lines cases, where some individuals whose homes were taken over by a drugs gang were considered victims of modern slavery by the CPS whereas in other cases the abuse of their vulnerability and other forms of coercion for the purpose of exploitation were not recognised. Justice and Care used this evidence alongside other information to raise the problem of inconsistent decision-making regarding victims of cuckooing by the CPS which has a detrimental impact on the pursuit of modern slavery prosecutions.

*'Justice and Care's report at least got some response from CPS at the national level about why we were facing problems pursuing prosecutions under the Modern Slavery Act for cuckooing. So that influence as well has been massive.'* (Police, GMP)

Justice and Care has also recognized the problem of getting the CPS to agree to modern slavery charges with respect to modern slavery criminal investigations more generally. A mapping analysis of more than sixty modern slavery cases revealed

that early investigative advice helped the police build case files that were more likely to lead to modern slavery charges and the CPS progressing the case. While there is considerable evidence the Victim Navigator programme is improving outcomes for survivors in terms of support and in terms of policing response, Justice and Care established a Legal Project, being piloted in Essex, in order to improve the investigative strategy and prosecution outcomes. The intention is for the Legal Expert to advise OICs around the investigative strategy and the collection of evidence so that their files meet the threshold for modern slavery charges, rather than the CPS settling on other charges.

### National-level lessons:

This evaluation has demonstrated the effectiveness of the Victim Navigator model. Interest from other forces since its inception has also shown the extent to which it can be rolled out on a national basis and can benefit a range of parties; survivors, police and non-police stakeholders. The evaluation has also afforded consideration to the critical 'success' factors that make the model more likely to be impactful (see section 5).

Survivors, police and non-police stakeholders, alongside Navigators themselves have also been able to make strategic recommendations for the UK Government, national police and NGO's to consider, such as the need for local housing and the need to improve wait times for survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking (documenting the impact this has on survivor well-being).

In the consultation outcome paper for the New Plan for Immigration policy statement, issued in March

2021<sup>6</sup>, the Home Office states: "We are considering testing a new approach which would involve embedding specialist workers within police forces to support victims and law enforcement officers on investigations." This suggests that the government has recognised the value Navigators, independent support workers, have added within police forces where they are embedded. Thus the programme and the Justice and Care June 2021 evaluation report, 'From Victim to Witness to Survivor: The Modern Slavery Victim Navigator Programme - An Independent Analysis', appears to have influenced Home Office policy discussions.



<sup>6</sup> See Chapter 6, in Home Office, Consultation Outcome New Plan for Immigration: policy statement, March 2021. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-plan-for-immigration/new-plan-for-immigration-policy-statement-accessible#chapter6>

**Objective 7: To build the capacity of police and other stakeholders to identify and effectively respond to victims of modern slavery, and to establish effective referral pathways for survivors including into the Victim Navigator programme, through the provision of bespoke training sessions**

Lack of awareness of modern slavery offences, how to identify victims, and forms of support available to survivors including the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) have been identified as key weaknesses particularly in relation to police responses to modern slavery. Navigators have sought to fill this gap by providing training to a variety of stakeholders. In addition they have been able to advertise their role and the support they can offer to police and other stakeholders. To date 2,432 police officers have been trained and 2,081 other stakeholders.

*“Essentially, the Navigators role depends on police correctly identifying victims who we can then support, so training is a fundamental part of that, as a number of police will have never received formal training on this complex topic.”*  
Surrey Navigator

As part of the evaluation process, participants in training were asked to complete a questionnaire. Obtaining feedback from participants proved to be more difficult than anticipated, and thus Justice and Care has not obtained the extent of feedback it hoped for in terms of possible impacts of training on participants’ knowledge and behaviour, particularly subsequent to the training. This was because evaluation questionnaires were not provided when training was less formal or part of a series of inputs from different speakers, and because of low response rates when the survey was offered. Nevertheless, data has been collected for specific training sessions. For example, in a post Modern Slavery Training survey completed by 85 police trained

by Navigators between January 2019 and June 2022, the vast majority of respondents said that the training substantially improved their knowledge<sup>7</sup> of how to identify victims of modern slavery (90%), of the particular needs of survivors of modern slavery (95%) and how they can better support survivors of modern slavery in their role (80%). Participants highlighted a definition of what MSHT encompasses, how to identify victims, advice on survivor engagement, and information about relevant support services as some of the most useful aspects of the training.

*“Being reminded of how to properly engage with victims of modern day slavery so that they feel empowered and supported. Also to be reminded of what constitutes as modern day slavery in today’s society”*

They indicated that they would apply the learnings from the training in their professional practice, approaching MSHT cases with greater confidence and increased vigilance, knowledge of the right people to contact and better approaches to survivor engagement.

*“Certainly when dealing with potential victims, I will look for the indicators which suggest they are being controlled”*

*“Most times victims do not wish to engage, it is nice to know I can call on Justice and Care so that I know victims are looked after and given every opportunity to be helped, which then takes a lot of pressure from me as an investigator to carry on with the rest of the investigation.”*

In a separate survey completed by 47 police following training between February- June 2022, 96% said that the training had substantially improved their knowledge of how survivors can be encouraged to engage with their investigation and 83% said that the training had substantially improved their confidence in investigating modern slavery.

*“This training gave me a wider knowledge of modern slavery and the processes involved around good investigations and what resources are available in relation to modern slavery investigations. I also found that this advice and knowledge will be beneficial and transferable to many of my other investigations from a victim engagement perspective, not just modern slavery.”*

While a 6 month post-training survey was also designed to assess whether training translated into behaviour change, police officers failed to respond to it in any significant numbers. However, there is additional evidence from interviews with police that training improved police officers’ knowledge of modern slavery and therefore better equipped them to identify victims, and to provide a more effective response to modern slavery cases. The post-training feedback corroborated this outcome. For example, 100% of officers in the Roads Policing Unit who were trained by the Surrey Navigator felt they were better able to identify victims and 97% felt they were more aware of the support needs of survivors. Some also suggested how the training might change their behaviour, saying they would “think wider and investigate suspect cases earlier when opportunity arises” and that it “will make

me think about jobs as a potential MSHT issue.” Information provided by the Modern Slavery SPOC for Surrey Road Policing Unit, suggests that the training did affect the behaviour of officers who looked beyond the minor traffic offence to identify modern slavery.

*“The initial stop was for minor traffic related offences however on further investigation the officers found Eastern European females that were being transported to locations for prostitution purposes. The officers by their own admission would not have looked at this had it not been for the input they were given by Justice and Care.”* (Police, Surrey)

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a key element of the UK’s response to modern slavery and provides a gateway to government funded services to survivors of modern slavery, but is not part of officers everyday practice. Officers particularly valued Navigators’ knowledge of the NRM but also how they helped skill them up so they could do their job better in the future.

*‘Like I said, for me the NRM process was unknown, and [the Navigator] explained that completely and I would not have done as good a service to those victims if [the Navigator] had not come with me to that meeting we had with them in [location] and explained. But now that I have some understanding of it I can probably explain it a bit better now.... She was actually invaluable’* (Police)

*“The NRM was explained, I’ve been here 5 years and people say “just do an NRM, it’s a referral” but no one has ever explained it.”* (Police)

<sup>7</sup> Rating of 4 or 5 on a 0-5 scale.

It was also acknowledged that Navigator's knowledge transfer could have an impact on the police force as a whole.

Navigators also support ongoing capacity-building within police forces by providing key background information and cultural context relating to trafficking and modern slavery cases, enabling them to improve their survivor engagement. In a case relating to Vietnamese survivors of criminal exploitation, the Navigator produced a briefing document for officers containing an overview of modern slavery legislation, an explanation of the culture and background of the potential victims from Vietnam that they were likely to encounter, and how and why they were frequently being exploited for cannabis grows in the UK. Additionally, she briefed them on the role of the Navigator during warrants in these kinds of cases and how officers should approach potential victims to optimise opportunities for them to engage.

### Discussion of extent to which theory of change has been validated

The Victim Navigator programme is underpinned by a Theory of Change (TOC) developed in 2018 (see section 1.5) which sets out the activities to be undertaken by Navigators and the expected outcomes and impact arising from these interventions. The TOC suggests how Navigators' activities might influence the behaviour of police officers and impact survivors and as a result lead to the proposed short and long term outcomes. Justice and Care created a Case Management System in order to collect data to monitor these outputs and outcomes. This was supplemented by the interviews conducted by evaluators throughout the lifetime of the pilot.

This evaluation has provided evidence that the activities and outputs have been delivered. It has also documented that many of the programme

Navigators have also provided training to non-police stakeholders who may encounter survivors of MSHT, including social care workers, community groups and safe house volunteers. In post-training surveys completed by 22 professional stakeholders between January 2019 and July 2021, a majority of respondents indicated that the training substantially improved their knowledge<sup>8</sup> of how to identify victims of modern slavery (71%), the particular needs of survivors of modern slavery (76%), and how they can better support survivors of modern slavery in their role (76%). They reported that the training increased their knowledge of the key indicators of MSHT, their "awareness of the range and scope of the problem" as well as knowing what services are available to survivors, and who to contact for help. Another said: "I am more aware of possible signs of modern slavery and how to report these if I had concerns".

outcomes are being achieved. For example, some OICs reported improved capability to investigate modern slavery cases or are more victim-centred in the way they operate. The evaluation has pointed to the Strategic Advice provided by Navigators as aiding police investigation as well as the training they have offered to improve understanding. Survivors have recounted the value of the practical and emotional support they have received from the Navigator. This support alongside a relationship of trust has enabled survivors to engage with police, and as shown earlier in the report, has increased engagement from those who had limited interaction with police initially. Testimony from OICs, Navigators and survivors have highlighted the importance of Navigators' long term support which has enabled survivors to stay engaged during the

lengthy period of a criminal investigation and a prosecution. It is survivors' testimony that is often key to a conviction, especially for a modern slavery offence. As noted in this evaluation, there is evidence that survivor engagement has enhanced police intelligence and aided criminal investigations, the identification of additional victims, the arrest of suspects and led to the conviction of offenders for a range of offences, including in some cases for modern slavery. This evidence supports the Theory of Change, and the underlying assumptions about behavioural change.

The TOC posits that a long term outcome is an increase in modern slavery prosecutions and convictions. However, based on information provided by Navigators and some OICs, the underlying assumption that Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) would be willing to charge suspects with modern slavery offences is not always the case. We have observed some reluctance to approve modern slavery charges and instead the CPS has agreed charges related to drugs offences or controlling prostitution which are easier to prosecute but carry lesser sentences. As a result the Victim Navigator programme might not achieve as much uplift in modern slavery prosecutions as expected without some changes in CPS behaviour or in the evidence presented to them. The legal pilot being undertaken in Essex is an attempt by Justice and Care to ensure modern slavery case files meet the CPS threshold for modern slavery offences.

The ongoing nature of Navigator support was detailed in the average length of time Support Plan cases have been kept open (section 1.3) and survivors have recounted how Navigators have helped them access a range of support services (Findings: Objective 1), again supporting the TOC and the outcome 'survivors successfully access services relevant to their needs and aspirations'.

The development of a Victim Navigator programme as well as increasing partnerships with NGOs in European countries has enhanced Justice and Care's ability to help repatriate survivors safely and with access to support on arrival (Findings: Objective 5), another proposed outcome set out in the TOC: 'survivors travel home in a risk assessed safe manner, with appropriate support in place on arrival'.

The findings of this independent evaluation indicate that the Victim Navigator programme has been successful in tackling the problem that underpinned its design: lack of a trusted bridge between the police and survivors of modern slavery. It has created a flexible and independently brokered specialist service accorded to individual survivors' needs. In addition, it has supported police forces in their efforts to respond to modern slavery by freeing officers to focus on criminal investigations. It has enhanced the support offered to survivors of modern slavery, improved survivor engagement with the criminal justice process and aided survivors' recovery and reintegration as outlined in the Theory of Change.

<sup>8</sup> Rating of 4 or 5 on a 0-5 scale

### 3. Conclusions and way forward

It is clear from this longitudinal and mixed methods evaluation, that the Victim Navigator Pilot has been effective in achieving the objectives it set out back in 2018. This has been evidenced through a triangulation of qualitative interview data, across a range of parties, including survivors, police, non-police stakeholders and Navigators themselves. This has been supplemented with quantitative case management data which has been compared to police forcedata in two locations prior to the introduction of a Navigator. The value of having a Navigator embedded in a police force affords benefits to survivors themselves, individual officers, teams tackling modern slavery, and, as the project has evolved, we have seen the repercussions of this on survivor retention through to successful prosecution outcomes. It therefore will be unsurprising that, as a result of this evidence, the independent evaluators are able to recommend that the Navigator model be rolled out on a national scale to police forces across the country. However in order for the success and fidelity of the original model to be continued, there are a number of factors that underpin the successful implementation of the Victim Navigator programme that must be considered. These include the legitimacy and respect accorded to the Navigators, the development of partnership working between police officers and Navigators, and being imbedded in modern slavery teams and in planning around police operations. We outline the other key factors below that should be adhered to in any national roll out.

#### The importance of working with but not for the police

The fact that Navigators are distinct and unique from other survivor support roles in the area of MSHT in their link to police seems to be one of the most important features of the Pilot. They are

associated with police but independent. They are a shining example of how police and non-police can work together in an integrated fashion. This is a careful balance that needs to be maintained and adds value in a number of ways; it enables survivors and other support services to be kept in the loop with regards to investigations, a factor that is often reported as missing. It also supports survivor engagement because there is a worker who is non-police (affording consideration to some of the survivors' concerns over police), who can alleviate fears and worries; perhaps preconceived ideas of police. Information can be accessed readily from police as well as given to police about survivor welfare. This is especially important given that survivors are often moved out of police force areas. Being able to access police records in a timely fashion, without relying on police resources is a fundamental success principle, as this process decision has an impact on the Navigator's early engagement with a case.

**Recommendation: Navigators retain their position as an independent, but integrated, staff member working alongside police with access to relevant systems.**

#### Force Readiness - seeing the value of a Navigator

'Force readiness' refers to the police's willingness to utilise the resource of the Navigator and permit them access to information and intelligence.

A significant success factor therefore is the legitimacy accorded to Navigators that stems from support from senior police officers, the Navigator role being imbedded in the policy and procedures of serious and organized crime, promoting the Navigator role through police officer training and through internal channels, including Navigators in police teams discussing modern slavery cases

and operations, and by word of mouth within the police force. The value attached to Navigators and their acknowledged legitimate status is central to force readiness and the best outcomes were seen in forces where Navigators were seen and used as credible resources who can add value to investigations.

Partnership between Justice and Care and police forces and other enforcement agencies is central to the implementation of the Victim Navigator programme. The programme has been successful where relations between police and Navigators are based on mutual respect for each other's professional expertise, understanding each other's roles and responsibilities, regular communication and reciprocal information sharing, and trust that they operate in the best interest of the survivor and of the criminal investigation.

**Recommendation: Navigators are only placed in forces where the force (at both a strategic and operational level) has an intrinsic understanding of the value of this role and is willing to work together, share information and utilise the resource to afford better outcomes for survivors and police investigations. Justice and Care should assess this 'readiness' before placing a Navigator into a force.**

#### Meeting Survivors at the Earliest Opportunity

A defining feature of the success of survivor and Navigator relationships was how early on in the proceedings they had met. Opportunities for Navigators to attend warrants and operations, meeting survivors as early as possible, should be encouraged. This is a practice police officers welcomed because they could focus on the criminal investigation knowing that the

Navigators were safeguarding and supporting survivors at the earliest opportunity.

It is therefore key to ensure wherever possible, Navigators meet survivors at the earliest stage, as the first 48 hours are likely to be crucial for them to reach out to potential victims of modern slavery and to offer support. There is considerable evidence that survivors are distrustful of the police, and thus Navigators, as independent support workers from a charity, have the possibility of building a bridge with survivors. This view was endorsed by police interviewees.

**Recommendation: Police forces should agree to Navigators being able to meet survivors at the earliest opportunity, including attending rescue operations where feasible.**

#### The breadth of support from Navigators; Agility and Flexibility- a solution focused approach

It is clear from the evaluation that survivors have a breadth of needs; both practical and emotional. Survivors report that Navigators are able to be responsive, flexible and creative in resolving their support needs, and no issue is too great or too small for them to attend to. They are solution focused and problem solving. Survivors gave examples of occasions where both their practical and emotional needs are covered and considered by Navigators, filling gaps or sourcing support where other services do not meet these needs. This is particularly important given the length of time that investigations take and the state of 'limbo' survivors are often left in during this time. To this end, the fact that support from the Navigator is open ended and can follow the survivor wherever they go (even if this is international) is incredibly important for continuity of care. This was seen in cases where support had been in place in the years leading up to a trial process. The relationship that

had been established prior to trial was essential to survivors' ability to engage and stay motivated throughout.

The police re-affirmed the value of the Navigators in offering a holistic response to survivors' needs, over an extended period of time, and to providing a much better service than they have the time or expertise to provide. Acting as a care coordinator AND care provider, and ensuring survivor needs are met is advantageous to police investigations and prosecution processes. Survivors are better equipped to engage in police interviews but also engaging in therapeutic support can provide medical and psychological evidence of the impact of modern slavery on a survivor that can be used in a prosecution.

**Recommendation:** Navigators should be able to make autonomous decisions about how to support survivors, with what needs. On expansion, the ability to move quickly and get sign off on funding for clothes, phones etc should not be lost. Navigators should also retain their ability to work with survivors indefinitely.

#### A caring but tenacious nature

Several survivors described the Navigators as their friend, which speaks to the level of trust they have in the Navigator, the rapport that has been built. This is extremely important given the level of trauma survivors will have experienced alongside being let down. It is clear that Navigators are passionate and dedicated to their role which contributes to its success. Navigators were described as compassionate and friendly, genuinely caring about their work and the welfare of survivors.

Further, Navigators are successful at their roles, in part, because they have the confidence and tenacity to challenge decisions (e.g. from police) and keep the survivor at the focus of investigations. They have cast a critical eye over existing, historic

or new cases. There were examples noted where Navigators had successfully managed to have cases re-examined under the lens of modern slavery, or support the discovery of further victims in open cases. Moreover, there is evidence that senior officers re-affirmed that investigatory strategies need to be improved or that the force needs to learn from poor practice based on Navigators' concerns.

**Recommendation:** So far, Justice and Care have recruited successfully to the Navigator roles, looking not only for skills and competencies but personal qualities that make the role a success. This should be retained in expansion attempts.

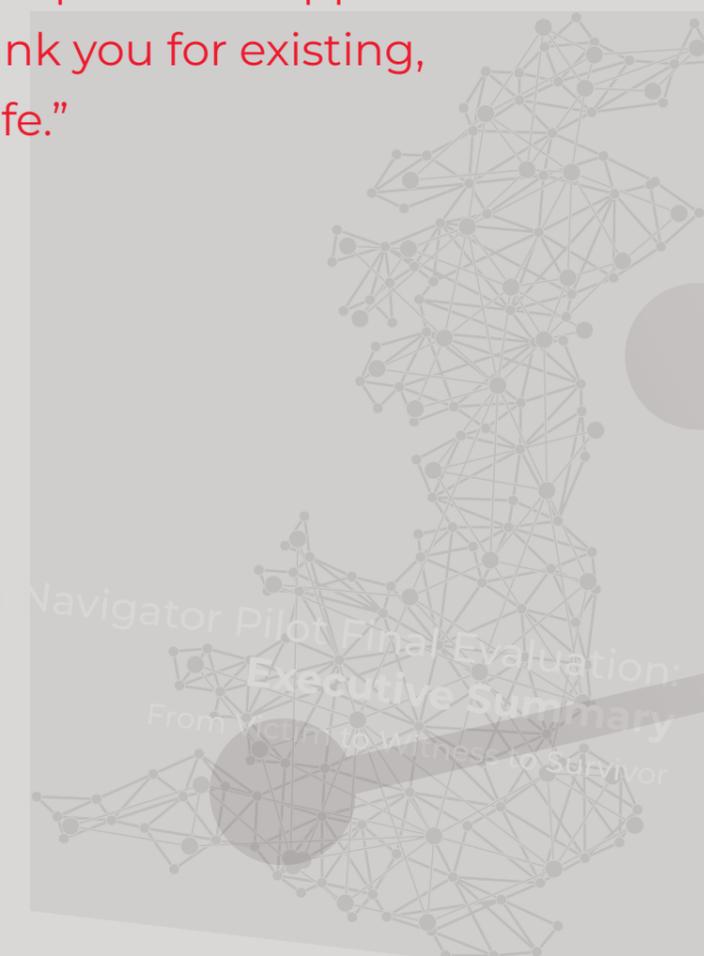
#### Support from Justice and Care

A further key success factor for the Navigator role, is the level of support and supervision offered by Justice and Care. The intense nature of the role, which often requires working unsociable hours, travel across the country and internationally, cannot be ignored. The evaluators have been working on the project since 2018 and the level of staff retention speaks volumes to the infrastructure Justice and Care provides, organisationally, around the Navigators. One Navigator commented that he had never felt so valued before in a role.

**Recommendation:** As the team expands, the infrastructure and governance from Justice and Care should be retained to ensure that staff well-being remains a central tenet of the role.

“I know people who do not have support. I have the best support that others only dream of. I am incredibly lucky to have (my Navigator). I have received and receive incredible and at times impossible support and understanding. Thank you for existing, because.. now we are safe.”

Survivor survey respondent, Surrey



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