

Lukia: Hi, I'm Lukia, Programme Officer at the London Legal Support Trust. I lead on the London Specialist Advice Forum, which is a network of frontline free legal advice agencies across the capital, supported by the City Bridge Foundation. The forum provides a space for agencies to come together to share knowledge, resources and opportunities, and to discuss sector developments and challenges. By facilitating peer support, communication and collaboration, we help build a more resilient advice sector that's better equipped to ensure access to justice for those who need it most.

Victoria ATLU: Hi, I'm co-founder and director of ATLU, the Anti-Trafficking and Labour Exploitation Unit. Our mission is to secure safety, rights and justice to survivors of human trafficking by using and challenging the law. We're the only UK charity dedicated to providing specialist holistic legal advice to survivors of human trafficking and slavery. We take on the toughest cases, share our learning to upskill the wider sector, and challenge the laws and policies that fail to protect survivors' human rights.

The last few years have been extremely challenging. We have seen successive governments scapegoating migrants and trafficking survivors and regressive immigration legislation driving exploitation. This hostile rhetoric has real life and damaging consequences for the communities we serve and those on the front lines supporting them. And we are operating in a legal advice crisis. There is a huge gulf between demand for legal advice and available supply. Legal advice to survivors of trafficking is crucial.

If survivors cannot access advice when they need it, the consequences are devastating, destitution, trauma, and further abuse and exploitation. Working in this environment also has real implications for the wellbeing of our team. The LLST's Specialist Advice Forum has played a crucial role in supporting us. It brings us together so we can share our experiences, challenges, and insights and learn from each other.

It builds solidarity so we feel connected to a community, making us better able to stay the course. It has also provided immensely practical support, providing critical funding so we can improve our meeting facilities, enabling us to work online with our community of survivors when they feel so scared that they are unable to travel. The network has a vital role to play in sustaining the advice sector. At a time when the public purse is threadbare, it is more important than ever that we make the case for access to justice. And this means free quality legal advice. The LLST creates a space where we can come together so that we can fight together.

So, a huge thank you for taking part today. The money raised through the London Legal Walk together with support from other funders helps make the forum and other LLST sector support initiatives possible.

