



## WESTMINSTER ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESAN TRUST

### Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2025

#### Introduction

The Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust recognises the grave impact of human trafficking and modern slavery, described by Pope Francis as “grievous wounds in the flesh of humanity... in the flesh of Christ himself.” This statement outlines our continued and evolving commitment to address and mitigate the risks of modern slavery within our operations and supply chains. As a founding member of the Santa Marta Group, we reaffirm our responsibility to combat this persistent crime through the collaborative efforts of our parishes, Caritas Westminster, and our wider diocesan community.

#### Organisational Structure

This statement covers the activities of the Diocese of Westminster, governed by the Trustees of the diocese. Our jurisdiction includes the London boroughs north of the River Thames, west of the Lea River, the County of Hertfordshire, and the Borough of Spelthorne in Surrey. The Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust (WRCDT) exists to advance the Roman Catholic religion within our diocese. We serve approximately half a million Catholics through 207 parishes, 204 schools, and a wide range of social outreach agencies, including Caritas Bakhita House, a refuge for survivors of modern slavery. The diocesan Justice and Peace Commission continues to promote social justice, peace, and human rights awareness.

#### Actions to Mitigate Risk of Slavery and Human Trafficking

##### Supply Chain and Risk Assessment

We have identified two primary areas of potential exposure to modern slavery: our workforce and our supply chains.

- **Workforce:**  
Managers receive ongoing training on identifying and mitigating the risk of slavery and human trafficking. Regular risk assessments are conducted at departmental level. Our recruitment procedures remain robust.
- **Supply Chains:**  
We continue to focus on the high-risk area of construction within our property services. Annually, the diocese manages over 500 construction and redecoration projects. Our partnership with Stop the Traffik has expanded, and our training for senior managers and project consultants now includes updated case studies and best practice guidance. The comprehensive supply chain risk mapping exercise for construction is ongoing and now extends to all other suppliers, with progress reviewed quarterly. We are committed to completing this mapping by the end of 2025.

#### Modern Slavery Policy

In 2024, we committed to developing a dedicated Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy. This policy was finalised and adopted in 2025. It clearly defines our institutional commitment, outlines

prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnership strategies, and aligns with both Catholic social teaching and UK legislation.

#### **Code of Conduct**

Our Code of Conduct sets expectations for all staff, volunteers, agency workers, and contractors, promoting professional behaviour and a non-discriminatory work environment. This is supported by policies on anti-bullying, equality, and diversity, ensuring compliance and access to support for all employees.

#### **Recruitment and Selection Policy**

We remain dedicated to attracting, recruiting, and retaining the best individuals for our charity. Our Recruitment and Selection Policy ensures compliance with UK employment law, including right to work checks for all staff categories.

#### **Training and Awareness**

Raising awareness among staff and stakeholders is central to our efforts. In 2025, we updated our training modules to reflect new legislation and emerging risks. All employees and volunteers are encouraged to complete this training, which is also part of our induction process. Bakhita House continues to serve as a beacon of understanding and support, having cared for over 210 women since 2015.

We have deepened our collaboration with external partners, including St Mary's University's Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse, Stop the Traffik, the Santa Marta Group, and local law enforcement. We continue to participate in the Find it, Fix it, Prevent it investment initiative to ensure our investments align with our anti-slavery values.

#### **Reporting and Whistleblowing**

Our confidential reporting mechanism allows employees, volunteers, and stakeholders to raise concerns or suspicions about modern slavery and human trafficking without fear of retaliation. All reports are thoroughly investigated, and appropriate action is taken.

#### **Supplier Due Diligence**

Through Churchmarketplace, the Catholic Church procurement conduit, we work only with suppliers who share our commitment to human rights. Due diligence is conducted on high-risk suppliers, including review of their policies and practices related to modern slavery. We encourage adherence to international standards, such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

#### **Continual Improvement**

We recognise that addressing modern slavery and human trafficking is an ongoing effort. In 2025, we enhanced our stakeholder engagement, participated in sector forums, and updated policies in response to legislative changes and best practice. Our annual review process ensures that we identify and address areas for improvement.

#### **Conclusion**

The Diocese of Westminster remains steadfast in its commitment to combatting modern slavery and human trafficking. Through robust policies, ongoing training, and collaborative efforts, we aim to eradicate modern slavery and protect human rights across our organisation and supply chains. We will continue to strengthen our approach and report on our progress in future statements.

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Vincent Nichols", preceded by a small cross symbol.

**H.E. Cardinal Vincent Nichols**  
**Chair of the Directors of the Trustee**  
**11 July 2025**

*This statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes the modern slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 31 December 2025.*