



Diocese of Westminster

Modern Slavery Statement

INTRODUCTION:

Human trafficking and modern slavery are, in the words of Pope Francis, 'grievous wounds in the flesh of humanity...in the flesh of Christ himself'. This statement sets out the Diocese of Westminster's actions to understand and address all potential modern slavery risks related to our work.

We recognise our responsibility to address and mitigate the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking. We are absolutely committed to putting in place steps to prevent slavery or human trafficking occurring in our diocese or our supply chains. As a founder member of the Santa Marta Group*, the Diocese is active in tackling this most ancient yet modern criminal activity. This statement sets out our commitment to eradicating these abhorrent practices and describes the actions we have taken through the end of our calendar year, December, 2019. We continue to take a significant lead in this area such as Caritas Bakhita House** and our Caritas Social Enterprise Ideas Development hub, details of which can be found in our annual report and on our website.

OUR POLICY:

The Diocese has a responsibility to comply with all the principles of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and will undertake due diligence and actions to ensure it is satisfied that there is no evidence of any act of modern day slavery or human trafficking in our organisation, our suppliers, subcontractors and other partners. Our senior management team has been provided with initial training and updates to help us better understand slavery and human trafficking and what is required to ensure that our supply chains under our control comply with the law. Procedures are in place to evaluate and verify the practices of any new or existing supplier, subcontractor or partner. Presentations are provided to wider staff groups, clergy and parishes reaffirming our commitment to combat modern slavery and human trafficking, clearly identifying the role that each of us can play in this work. Within our recruitment, facilities and procurement practices, we commit that each of the following is met:

- Every employee, subcontractor and supplier employee / representative should have freedom of movement
- No employee should be indebted or coerced to work
- No employee should pay for a job.

Furthermore, regular review of our contractors and their compliance with the Modern Slavery Act is integrated into our risk management system. We believe that the biggest risk in our supply chain is in the construction, refurbishment and maintenance of the fabric of our buildings. Annually we have over 300 projects of this nature that employ the services of the construction trades. The Property Department and Education Service have begun monitoring compliance by our contractors and their sub-contractors. We recognise that this is an ongoing challenge, as it is difficult to ensure that the entire supply chain is slavery free. We accept that this is only the beginning of our work, and we are fully committed to this endeavour.

Additionally, as part of our commitment to working to eradicate modern slavery, we have joined the 'Find It, Fix It, Prevent It' investor initiative, asking the companies that we invest in to increase their efforts to identify human trafficking, forced labour and modern slavery in their supply chains; review, assess and disclose the effectiveness of their attempts to address the issue; and support the provision of remedy to victims of modern slavery within their supply chains.

We also recognise that we alone cannot effectively tackle and address the issues of modern slavery, a goal that can be achieved only through building sustainable long-term partnerships and collaborations between organisations, businesses, nonprofit/charitable/religious groups and governments.

The Trustees of the Diocese and senior management take responsibility for implementing this policy and its objectives and will provide the necessary resources to ensure that its practices are effective in ensuring that modern day slavery is not taking place. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Finance Board and the Trustees as part of the annual accounts procedures. This statement has been approved by the Board of Trustees of the Diocese at their meeting on 13 December 2019.

This statement is made pursuant to the relevant legal requirements of the United Kingdom.



Bishop John Sherrington
Trustee

** The Santa Marta Group is an alliance of international police chiefs and bishops from around the world working together with civil society in a process endorsed by Pope Francis, to eradicate human trafficking and modern day slavery. (For more information please visit <http://santamartagroup.com/>)*

*** Caritas Bakhita House provides women escaping from human trafficking with the safety and support which allows them to begin the recovery process. Services include emergency support, legal and financial assistance, mentoring, and help with accessing accommodation. (For more information please visit <https://www.caritaswestminster.org.uk/bakhita-house.php>)*