

DIOCESE OF SALFORD

Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Statement 2024



Foreword by Bishop John Arnold

I welcome and endorse this Statement which acknowledges our potential complicity in human exploitation and commits the Diocese to doing everything we can to ensure that our supply chains are free of modern slavery.

There is a global problem happening now. There are more slaves in the world currently than at the height of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. The true number of people who are experiencing the trauma of modern slavery is unknown, but the Global Slavery Index estimates 50 million people worldwide and 136,000 people in the United Kingdom. This includes members of our own communities and parishes.

Our churches and schools are often the first place that people experiencing the crime of slavery turn to for support. We are making a firm commitment to tackling modern slavery in all its forms and to support people affected at a time they need it most, a journey we have been committed to for some years. This is a subject Pope Francis called 'a crime against humanity' and we all know that we simply cannot sit back and do nothing while so many people are suffering in such terrible ways.

Our parishes and churches should be a sanctuary for those who need it. We will work with our partner agencies and the authorities to protect the human dignity of every person. Everyone deserves to feel safe and secure and it's all of our duties to be aware of how we can help others to do that and also speak out and take action to help.

This statement and our action so far is another step towards our commitment to tackle modern slavery within the diocese.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John", with a small cross-like symbol above the first letter.

Introduction

The Diocese is choosing to produce and publish a Modern Slavery Statement. We believe that all businesses, charities and organisations have a responsibility to act.

This Modern Slavery Statement represents our efforts to avoid exploitative labour practice in our supply chains, raise awareness within our communities and sets out our plan for 2024 to make tackling Modern Slavery integral to our wider social justice agenda.

Our work highlighting and taking action on Modern Slavery does not stand alone. It coexists with our aim of creating a culture of safer environment and ensuring that the Diocese of Salford fosters a culture of safeguarding. We will work to ensure that everyone in the Diocese understands their responsibility to safeguarding and promote the well-being of those who worship in our churches or who join us for any activity facilitated by church members. We will continue to strive towards the highest standards of practice to keep people safe.

Organisational Structure

The statement covers the activities of:

- The Diocese of Salford
- Caritas, Diocese of Salford
- SDC Trading Limited

The Trustees of the Diocese are responsible for the governance of all the above organisations and this single statement has been created to unite us in the single aim of tackling modern slavery.

The Diocese includes much of Greater Manchester north of the Mersey and Lancashire including Blackburn and Burnley. The diocese comprises approximately 263,295 Catholics, with 109 parishes and 206 schools. Social outreach is coordinated by Caritas Diocese of Salford who provide a practical response to those in crisis, suffering hardship or who are at risk, helping to rebuild lives for the long-term and enabling people to live in a safe, healthy and secure environment.

We are working with our schools and within the local Catholic Academy Trusts to ensure that all members of the diocesan family are aligned on action, advocacy and training.

What are we currently doing to tackle Modern Slavery?

1. Ethical Investment

The Diocese is establishing itself as a Responsible Investor, with an authentic set of investment statements and an accompanying investment framework that demonstrates that the Catholic Social Teaching of Human Dignity, the Common Good and Care for Our Common Home are central to how our investment portfolio is managed, shaped and targeted.

We already work closely with the Church Investors Group which is a membership organisation representing the charitable and pension funds of various Christian denominations, dioceses, religious orders and other faith-based charities. The Secretariat of the Church Investors Group (CIG) is provided by CCLA.

In line with our aim to be a Responsible Investor, CIG and CCLA realise the difference investors can make by contributing to the fight against slavery. As such they have developed a four-part engagement plan which aims to:

- encourage companies to develop better policies, processes and procedures for identifying and then addressing Modern Slavery
- tackle one of the main causes of slavery, debt bondage, by calling on companies to adopt 'Employer Pays Principle', prohibiting employers from charging recruitment fees
- increase awareness of Modern Slavery amongst stakeholders
- call for increased global legislation and regulation.

Caritas Diocese of Salford has chosen to allocate financial resources directly to CCLA's recently introduced Catholic Fund, in accordance with the broader social and moral doctrines of the Church. This decision aligns with CCLA's dedicated Modern Slavery programme, 'Find It, Fix It, Prevent It,' initiated in 2019. This programme seeks to promote a meaningful engagement through work with the government and the Home Office, aid companies in developing and implementing better processes for finding fixing and preventing modern slavery and to develop better data about the nature, extent and how to end modern slavery. The investment policy of the Fund reflects the faith and teachings of the Catholic Church. Oversight is provided by an independent Catholic faith-consistent investment committee, ensuring the investment policy evolves over time to remain pertinent and congruent with the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church. Further details regarding the faith-consistent investment policy can be accessed in the fund's prospectus.

2. Advocacy and Social Justice

Caritas Diocese of Salford Anti-Trafficking - Awareness raising initiatives

Caritas Diocese of Salford's Anti-Trafficking initiatives have evolved significantly since their inception in 2015, originating from the dedicated efforts of parish volunteers at Our Lady of the Valley Parish, Clitheroe. Initially collaborating with Lancashire Police to raise awareness, the project has since expanded its reach and impact. Caritas now proudly represents the Diocese and its associated organisations in key forums dedicated to combating human trafficking and modern slavery.

- Greater Manchester Anti-Trafficking and Slavery NGO Forum

Caritas actively participates in the Greater Manchester Anti-Trafficking and Slavery NGO Forum, which operates under the auspices of Programme Challenger, Greater Manchester's comprehensive strategy to combat serious and organised crime. Comprising over 36 agencies from across Greater Manchester, the Forum facilitates crucial networking opportunities with stakeholders such as Greater Manchester Police, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the Home Office, and various voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sector members. Through these engagements, Caritas contributes to the development and dissemination of strategies aimed at addressing human trafficking, modern slavery, and related crimes.

- Pan Lancashire Anti-Slavery Partnership

Furthermore, Caritas plays a pivotal role in the Pan Lancashire Anti-Slavery Partnership (PLASP), a collaborative platform that unites statutory agencies, faith groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and law enforcement bodies in the fight against modern slavery. PLASP operates through specialised subgroups focusing on Training, Policies and Procedures, Faith, Victim Support, and Publicity. Together, these subgroups develop essential materials, protocols, and safeguarding guidance to ensure a cohesive and consistent approach to combating modern slavery across Lancashire. Established with the backing of the Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner, PLASP represents a collective commitment to eradicating modern slavery through coordinated efforts and collaborative initiatives. Caritas' involvement underscores its dedication to advocating for victims, raising awareness, and actively contributing to the broader anti-trafficking agenda at both regional and county levels. *Caritas Diocese of Salford partnership with the Medaille Trust*

The Medaille Trust was created to provide safe refuge and freedom for people who had experienced modern slavery. Caritas work very closely with the Medaille Trust providing places of accommodation for people and providing opportunities to network and share advocacy initiatives.

3. Training

Training is a key tool in our diocesan journey to raise awareness and tackle Modern Slavery within our communities. Training sessions for parish clergy and safeguarding representatives have taken place in recent years but we will now expand these sessions. Working with key partners our awareness training will be offered to key personnel, staff and volunteers in schools and parishes, especially those involved in safeguarding people at risk.

Year 3 Plan (2024)

We have completed a review of our HR, procurement, grievance/whistle blowing, and training practices to ensure they are mindful of the Modern Slavery agenda and compliant with relevant policies, practices and legislation.

Code of Conduct

A new Code of Conduct for central suppliers was issued and implemented in 2023. In 2024 we will focus on the implementing in our parishes and subsidiaries.

This is supporting our ongoing work in the following areas:

1. Due Diligence

The biggest risk of slavery in the diocese is our supply chain. The Code of Conduct, requires our suppliers and contractors to monitor their supply chain.

In addition we will:

- a. assess existing contracts to develop a clear understanding of our supply chains

- b. review subcontractors
- c. provide training for our employees and for our consultants that manage projects on our behalf.

2. Areas of Risk

Whilst the core of what we do can be considered low risk, we are reviewing that risk and specifically we acknowledge some of the key risk areas may come from our contracted work particularly in the areas of:

- properties, construction & maintenance
- IT equipment and services
- cleaning and waste management
- purchase and production of clothing
- hospitality and catering

3. Mitigation

We will mitigate some of that risk by implementing a Modern Slavery risk assessment and put measures in place to help identify and remove the occurrence of Modern Slavery within our supply chains.

Currently there are numerous practices that we undertake to mitigate risk of Modern Slavery, amongst which are rigorous employment checks for all workers. Where possible we employ directly with limited reliance on agency/ temporary staff. We also use where possible locally sourced, reputable companies for all goods and services.

Trustees Approval

Our revised Modern Slavery Statement has been approved by the Trustees in 2024. This replaces the 2022 published version and will be reviewed at the end of 2025.

Bishop John Arnold
Bishop of Salford

Sir Peter Fahy
Chair of Modern Slavery Group