



## **Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Compliance Statement**

### **Organisational Structure**

The Canal & River Trust (the "Trust") is a charity (registered charity number 1146792). We are responsible for the preservation, protection, operation and management of around 2,000 miles of waterways in England and Wales, together with associated docks, reservoirs, buildings, sites of special scientific interest and wildlife conservation areas. We also take an active role in promoting wellbeing through the use of the environments and assets we look after.

The Trust is also registered as a private company limited by guarantee with no share capital in England and Wales (registered number 07807276).

The Trust is committed to achieving high standards of ethical practice and places significant importance on guarding against modern slavery in all its forms.

### **Supply Chain Due Diligence and Risk Assessment**

Our approved supplier database is monitored and reviewed annually to assess and deal with any risk of modern slavery occurring in the supply chain.

During our procurement processes, we ask prospective suppliers of high value contracts to confirm whether they source materials and/or labour from countries deemed to have a high risk of modern slavery and, if so, to provide details of the controls they have in place to ensure their supply chain is free from slavery. Our Procurement Team reviews the information provided and will reject prospective suppliers who cannot demonstrate that they adequately control risks of exploitation. Any suppliers who source materials or labour from high-risk countries are required to update information about their modern slavery control measures every year. During the financial year 2023/24, the Trust reviewed its approved suppliers with an annual expenditure over £150,000 and determined that no further action was required.

Our Recruitment Team maintains a list of approved agencies for the supply of temporary labour and introduction of candidates for permanent employment, who have been appointed following a procurement process. The arrangements we put in place with our approved agencies include anti-slavery provisions and terms in relation to pay and work visas.

### **Policies and Procedures**

We are committed to developing and maintaining clear organisational policies and practices to tackle modern slavery.

We have an Anti-Slavery & Human Trafficking Standard in place, which explains the steps we take to minimise risks of modern slavery in connection with our charity and provides information about how to identify and report concerns about slavery and human trafficking. Our Standard is reviewed annually, and was most recently reviewed in September 2024.

Safeguarding is a governance priority at the Trust. Our Safeguarding Standard sets out how we put our safeguarding commitments into practice and explains how to raise safeguarding concerns to our Safeguarding Team. The Standard is published on our website and is reviewed annually as a minimum. We have appointed a Safeguarding Trustee to provide the Board with enhanced oversight of the Trust's safeguarding regime and to contribute to strategic safeguarding decisions.

We seek to engage with organisations which take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously and take regular opportunities to raise the profile of safeguarding and communicate our expectations to organisations and groups working with, or in connection with, the Trust.

We have a clear framework of rules and behaviours, including an employee Code of Conduct and Volunteer's Handbook. We encourage our people to speak out about concerns. Our Whistleblowing Policy Statement sets out our commitment to a culture of openness. Our Whistleblowing Policy Statement, Standard and training clearly set out how individuals can safely report any actual or suspected criminal offence, including modern slavery and human trafficking. We provide our people with the opportunity to raise concerns directly to us or, alternatively, to an appointed independent whistleblowing services provider. Our Whistleblowing Standard, which is reviewed annually, also sets out how we protect whistleblowers.

Our Employee Assistance Programme also provides our people with a way of seeking confidential advice, including about any modern slavery or human trafficking concerns they may have.

We take our obligation to prevent illegal working seriously and have a right to work check system in place.

We reference the Living Wage Foundation pay rates when reviewing our salary bands and undertake monthly and annual reviews to ensure compliance with the National Minimum Wage requirements.

### **Training**

We provide mandatory safeguarding training to all new employees and relevant volunteers, which provides guidance on recognising signs of abuse, harm or mistreatment and how to report concerns to our safeguarding team. Refresher training is provided every three years, with our most recent refresher training delivered in 2023.

We provide whistleblowing training to all new employees to ensure they know how to raise concerns, and the protections in place for those who do. We provide refresher training every three years. Our most recent refresher training was delivered in 2024. We raise the profile of our Whistleblowing Standard to volunteers through our Volunteer's Handbook.

### **Approval**

This statement is made on behalf of the Trust in accordance with section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes our modern slavery and human trafficking statement in relation to our financial year ending 5 April 2024. It was approved by the board on 26 September 2024.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Orr', is written over a horizontal line.

**David Orr CBE**  
Chair of Board of Trustees