



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 conversation 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).

Information about our charity and what we do can be found in our [Annual Report & Accounts](#).

We are committed to achieving high standards of ethical practice and place significant importance on guarding against modern slavery in all its forms.

Supply Chain Due Diligence and Risk Management

We engage with over 2,200 suppliers, who provide a broad range of goods and services, including the supply of equipment and machinery, the supply of goods sold at our museums and attractions, construction and maintenance services, environmental and ecological services, cleaning and catering services and training.

Our Procurement Policy Statement sets out our commitment to maintain auditable, transparent, and fair processes that enable the assessment and management of risk and support our sustainability targets and code of ethics.

We maintain an approved supplier database, which is monitored and reviewed annually by our Procurement Team 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 2024/25, 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.

- Our **Anti-Slavery & Human Trafficking Standard** 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 advises our people to report any concerns about modern slavery to our Safeguarding Team and explains that all reports will be taken seriously. Our Standard identifies the people who will be involved in investigating concerns, and links to our Serious Incident Reporting Standard, under which concerns may be referred to the relevant regulatory agency. Our Anti-Slavery & Human Trafficking Standard and procedures are reviewed annually.
- Our **Procurement Standard** sets out due diligence procedures which must be undertaken before engaging suppliers.
- 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 systems 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 in place a clear framework of rules and behaviours, including our employee **Code of Conduct**, **Volunteer's Handbook** and **Respect at Work Standard**.
- 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 have a **Grievance Procedure** in place, under which employees can raise any concerns about terms and conditions of employment.
- We reference the Government's National Living Wage pay rates when reviewing our salary bands and undertake monthly and annual reviews to ensure compliance with the National Minimum Wage requirements.
- We engage meaningfully with representatives of our recognised trade unions about employee welfare, working conditions and pay.
- We take our obligation to prevent illegal working seriously and have a right to work check system in place.

Our policy documents are available to employees and volunteers on our intranet. Our internal policy framework includes details about how we communicate updates to our policy documents and provides a system for recording the steps we have taken in practice to do this.

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.

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. We raise the profile of our Whistleblowing Standard to volunteers through our Volunteer's Handbook and induction process.

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 2025. It was approved by the board on 25 September 2025.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Orr', is written over a faint, light blue circular stamp.

David Orr CBE
Chair of Board of Trustees