

Modern Slavery Statement 2021/2022

Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

About us

The Forestry Commission is the government department responsible for protecting, expanding, and promoting the sustainable management of woodlands. We increase the value of woodlands to society and the environment. We work with two agencies: Forestry England and Forest Research.

Forestry England is England's largest land manager and custodian of the nation's public forests. Forestry England has around 1,200 committed staff and volunteers looking after more land and more trees than any other organisation. It generates revenue by sustainably harvesting and selling timber, and by working with commercial partners to offer new ways to experience and enjoy woodlands and develop business activities.

Forest Research is Great Britain's principal organisation for forestry and tree related research and is internationally renowned for the provision of evidence and scientific services in support of sustainable forestry.

Our supply chains

Our supply chains are made up of a diverse range of third-party providers, many of which are small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). We procure a varied range of goods and services from corporate clothing and tree shelters, through to services such as harvesting, planting, forest road maintenance and plant health surveillance. We also award grants to others to protect, improve and expand England's woodlands. In 2021/22 we spent approximately £89 million buying goods and services from our direct (tier 1) suppliers.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to slavery and human trafficking and are committed to ensuring that there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in our supply chains or in any part of our business.

This statement explains the steps that we took during financial year 2021/21 to identify, prevent and mitigate modern slavery in our operations and supply chains. We publish this statement on our gov.uk website and the [modern slavery statement registry](#).

Steps to tackle modern slavery

The steps that we have taken to reduce the risk of modern slavery in our business are:

Policies

We pay all our employees above the National Living Wage. Our grievance, safeguarding, bullying and harassment, and whistleblowing policies give a platform for our employees and volunteers to raise concerns and 'blow the whistle' on any wrong-doing and to raise concerns about poor working practices. We have a programme of review for key employee policies. During 2021/22 we introduced improvements to our whistleblowing policy to show how anyone who raises a concern will be fully supported. We require our suppliers to following the Government [Supplier Code of Conduct](#) and our grant recipients are expected to follow the Government [Code of Conduct for Grant Recipients](#).

Risk assessment and selecting who we work with

During our procurement planning stage, we identify our contracts where there is greater risk of modern slavery occurring. Our tenders follow the due diligence processes of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and Concession Contract Regulations 2016. This includes excluding suppliers that have been found in breach of social and labour laws and building in further selection criteria for higher risk contracts. All major procurements explicitly evaluate social value (including modern slavery risks where relevant) with a minimum 10% weighting at award stage. We also check slavery and human trafficking statements of those bidding for our contracts.

Contract terms

Our standard conditions of contract reflect our approach to modern slavery including reserving our rights to terminate contracts with suppliers if there is evidence of non-compliance with the Act.

Training and awareness raising

Our Commercial team undertake regular Continuing Professional Development which includes the annual Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) ethical procurement eLearning and assessment. We also use our internal communication channels, such as blogs and articles, to raise awareness of these issues to all staff. In the last year this included highlighting World Whistle-blowers Day which is held annually on 23 June.

This statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes our slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 31st March 2022.

Signed:



Richard Stanford
Position: Chief Executive Officer, Forestry Commission