

Modern Slavery Statement 2023



An update from the Chief Executive

This year, here, at the Blue Cross we have continued to improve our practices to combat slavery and human trafficking. This statement sets out the steps that Blue Cross and its wholly owned subsidiary companies, are taking to try and ensure modern slavery is not taking place in our business or supply chains and is made pursuant to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. We strive to act ethically and with integrity in all of our business dealings and relationships to minimise the risk that modern slavery is taking place anywhere in our own business or in any of our supply chains. We shall also ensure our approach and stance is clear with our partner organisations. This statement covers Blue Cross and its two wholly owned subsidiaries, Blue Cross Trading Company Ltd and Blue Cross (D&B) Company Ltd

Organisational structure

We are a charity dedicated to helping sick, injured, abandoned, unwanted or homeless pets. Thousands of pets turn to us for help every year.

We are governed by a Board of Trustees who volunteer their time to help direct our work. They oversee our Directors who manage our 756 staff and 2,546 volunteers across the whole charity. We have two wholly owned trading subsidiary undertakings.

Supply chains

We have a variety of supply chains that provide goods, services and works to support the delivery of our frontline services as well as enabling internal functions to deliver services within the organisation. The vast majority of our suppliers and contractors are based in the UK or the EU. We acknowledge that there may be modern slavery occurring in our supply chains that we are not aware of and we are committed to continuously improving our processes and procedures to identify, reduce and eliminate this wherever possible.

Our policies on anti-slavery and human trafficking

We are committed to working towards ensuring that there is the lowest possible risk of modern slavery or human trafficking in our supply chains or in any part of our business. We have developed an Anti-slavery and Human Trafficking Policy, which reflects our commitment to acting ethically and with integrity in all of our business relationships. We will look to treat any breach of our Anti-slavery and Human Trafficking Policy very seriously. For example, there will be an investigation of any employee who has potentially breached the policy to determine whether disciplinary action is required.

We are also continuing the process of developing, effective systems and controls to minimise the risk that slavery and human trafficking is taking place anywhere in Blue Cross or our supply chains.

Supplier adherence to our values and ethics

We believe it is important that our approach to procurement ensures alignment with our values and that suppliers meet the standards we would expect from an Environmental, Social and Governance perspective. The work that we planned in previous years that was disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic has now been substantially completed. A dedicated procurement manager role has been in place for nine months having been appointed in September of 2022. A new Procurement policy and process has been developed and introduced, which include enhancements to the due diligence requirements for potential suppliers of the charity to help identify concerns regarding modern slavery. Our due diligence processes will also continue to have an increased focus on high-risk areas where modern slavery may be more prevalent.

Now that our Procurement process is operational and procedures are more clearly focused in terms of supplier compliance, we are able to monitor our performance against these agreed procedures and report against them.

Although pleased with our recent progress in this area we are aiming to go further this year by the completion of a Supplier code of Conduct and also by testing the use of Crown Commercial Services and the many framework agreements they have. By making use of their expertise, we would aim to mirror the wider compliance enforced on those suppliers that are chosen by the UK public sector as a whole and the security that can offer us in the third sector.

Our continued commitment

We recognise the importance of maintaining constant vigilance to identify and address any issues associated with slavery and human trafficking in Blue Cross and throughout our supply chains. We are committed to continuing to enhance our capacity to identify, prevent and mitigate any actual or potential risks in these areas. This includes communications through various channels to staff and also the ability to report concerns through our Whistleblowing process.

This statement is made pursuant to section 54 (Part 6) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes Blue Cross' slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 31 December 2022. It has been approved by the Board of Trustees and is signed by Chris Burghes the charity's Chief Executive.



Chris Burghes

Chief Executive, Blue Cross
30 June 2023

Blue Cross

Shilton Road, Burford, Oxfordshire, OX18 4PF

Tel: 0300 7771897 | Fax: 0300 7771601 | info@bluecross.org.uk

[bluecross.org.uk](https://www.bluecross.org.uk)