

Modern Slavery Statement 2022



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United Welsh is an innovative not-for-profit organisation providing housing and services to people in South Wales. We employ almost 400 people and our Group includes our repairs and maintenance service Celtic Horizons; timber frame manufacturer Celtic Offsite, and Harmoni Homes Ltd which builds affordable homes and homes for sale.

We currently manage over 6,000 properties across 11 local authorities and in the last five years have built more than 1,000 homes. We provide a range of accommodation including Extra Care and supported housing and are committed to working in partnership with local authorities, health boards and others to provide specialist projects that help people with their wellbeing and encourage independent living in the community.

We are passionate about making a difference, keeping people safe, embracing diversity and challenging inequality, working efficiently and effectively, and helping everyone make the best of their strengths.

We are committed to doing all we can to prevent modern slavery and to place the victims and their wellbeing as the focus of our actions.

We regard our approach to preventing modern slavery alongside our commitments on equality, diversity and inclusion, and our approach to safeguarding. We are aware that we can act to prevent modern slavery both in our supply chains and in the work we do with vulnerable people, working directly with those who may be victims. We are mindful of the fact that our homes may be used to harbour, or sublet to, trafficked individuals and families – and we're committed to working with partners such as the Police to investigate and address this unacceptable and illegal practice.

Our first Modern Slavery statement was developed in 2021 and so we are in the early stages of developing our approach fully.

Structure and supply chains

We aim to develop our supply chain mapping, risk assessments and our approach to due diligence. We have identified those suppliers representing 75% of our expenditure and have begun to check that they have reasonable approaches to combatting modern slavery.

This will sit alongside the due diligence we will also be doing as an accredited Living Wage employer.

Policies in relation to slavery and human trafficking

We already have in place:

- Policies and procedures for safeguarding children and adults

- Staff code of conduct

- Confidential reporting procedure (whistleblowing)

- Recruitment policy and procedure

We will review these through the lens of preventing modern slavery and develop other relevant policies and procedures to provide a framework for the due diligence of suppliers and victim support for when we find modern slavery taking place.

Effective action to address modern slavery

We already have experience in working in partnership with others, such as local social services, in supporting victims of modern slavery in our communities. We are mindful of the fact that our homes may be used to harbour, or sublet to, trafficked individuals and families. We are committed to working with partners, such as the police, to investigate and address this unacceptable and illegal practice.

We will build on this experience to develop plans that can be put into action should we find instances of modern slavery among our own workforce, in our supply chain or other settings.

Our primary concern will always be the welfare of the victims or potential victims.

Training

To support the actions described above we will ensure all staff are aware of and understand what modern slavery is, the harm it causes and how to recognise when it may be happening.

The initial edition of this Statement was publicised to all staff in our staff newsletter, inviting them to complete through our online Learning Hub modules on:

- Modern Slavery – a legal overview

- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

- How to spot Human Trafficking

These are generic modules which we aim to add to with learning that is more specific to the settings in which we work.