**Modern Day Slavery Policy Statement**

Modern slavery is an umbrella term which refers to slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking. Due to the secretive nature of modern slavery, it is a complex and ever evolving crime. It is an issue faced by our global church partner in India. It is also an issue here in the UK.

The United Reformed Church West Midlands Synod is committed to working in partnership with others to see the eradication of modern slavery in all its forms. We will strive to ensure that acts of modern slavery and human trafficking cannot occur anywhere within our Synod, Local Churches, linked organisations and groups. We are committed to implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to prevent this from happening.

We adopt a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery and will not knowingly appoint or work with any supplier or partner who cannot demonstrate the same level of commitment in this area. We fully support the investigation and reporting of any supplier found to be in breach of our modern-slavery policy and approach to modern-slavery and human trafficking.

We seek to use our influence as Investors to ensure the companies in which we invest take this issue as seriously as we do.

We also have a role to play in resourcing and mobilising local congregations of the United Reformed Church in the West Midlands Synod in the battle to eradicate modern slavery.

**Underlying Principle**

Our policies and procedures must reflect our commitment to acting ethically in our all relationships, including our business relationships, and help us enforce effective systems and controls to mitigate the risk of modern slavery occurring in our organisations or supply chains.

**Our policies and procedures**

* **Employment and Human Resources** **Policies** – we will continue to deploy HR Policies that ensure that staff are properly appointed, paid fairly and enjoy a competitive remuneration package. Specifically, we check the eligibility to work of all new employees and no staff member is paid less than Real Living Wage. For a small fee we can register our commitment to it.
* **Ethical Investment Policy -** Our investment advisors are informed of our Ethical standards and there is an active screening process to keep our investment portfolio in line with those standards.
* **Procurement Policy** – Synod will draw up a procurement policy which will set out factors which must be followed when selecting major and regular suppliers. This will assist in ensuring that a good business partner is selected, and includes supplier reputation and compliance with relevant laws and ethical procedures.
* **A** **Supplier Code of Conduct** – will be designed to help our suppliers understand the behaviours and standards that are expected of them when working with and for the Synod.

This will include commitments to the Living Wage and to the abolition of slavery. Our Supplier Code of Conduct will be sent to all new major and regular suppliers (as defined by the Procurement Policy) as part of our due diligence process

**Synod Policy and Local Churches**

The West Midlands Synod urges all local churches within the Synod to be aware of this statement and to consider adopting it locally.

The Synod will seek to direct local churches to resources and organisations that seek to raise awareness of modern-day slavery.

The Synod, in conjunction with other partners, will endeavour to provide training in how to spot the signs and respond appropriately to suspected instances modern day slavery. In this, we will bear in mind the experience of our global partner in India.

The Synod will encourage local churches to make helpline numbers and contact details of support organisations clearly available in their premises so that any victims using the premises may find access to them.

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Responsible Body: Synod Mission Council