

Modern slavery statement

The 2024 statement from the British Red Cross

At the British Red Cross, our vision is of a world where everyone gets the help they need in a crisis. Our aim is to mobilise the power of humanity so that individuals and communities can prepare for, deal with and recover from emergencies. As of the beginning of 2025 just over 10,500 regular volunteers and nearly 4,000 staff worked together at the British Red Cross to fulfil our vision and mission, both in the UK and overseas. As a humanitarian organisation, our mission is always to prevent and alleviate human suffering in the UK and throughout the world, to protect life and health, and to ensure respect and dignity for all people.

The British Red Cross is a prominent member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (the Movement). It has volunteers and staff contributing to initiatives within the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and 191 National Societies. As part of the Movement, the British Red Cross is committed to, and legally bound by, seven fundamental principles¹ that guide everything we do.

The British Red Cross, like other National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies,² has a special, officially recognised status and role as an auxiliary to the UK public authorities in the humanitarian field. This role applies at all times, both in peace and in war,³ and gives the British Red Cross a unique legal status. It is a private organisation with certain recognised public functions. The British Red Cross is neither part of government nor a non-governmental organisation. The auxiliary status and role are a National Society's⁴ standing invitation to participate in public humanitarian services. This provides a unique opportunity to build a relationship between a National Society and its government. While it is an auxiliary to His Majesty's Government, the British Red Cross is required to maintain its autonomy so that it can act in accordance with its fundamental principles.⁵

Our anti-slavery commitment

We are committed to recognising and responding to trafficking and other forms of modern slavery, both where we encounter it in our supply chains and as a key element of our service operations. As part of this dual commitment, we support people in crisis through our anti-trafficking work and safeguarding response.

Our Strategy 2030 commits us to restoring safety and dignity for people who are displaced, focusing on the most urgent cases of need. Each year, we support tens of thousands of people through our services across the UK. In 2024, that included 741 adults and children who may have experienced trafficking.

This document fulfils the British Red Cross' reporting obligation, inline with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 ("the Act"), to provide a slavery and human trafficking statement covering activities for the financial year ending 31 December 2024. Building on our statements from previous years, this statement highlights new developments and important initiatives we have taken in 2024. All our work connected to reducing the risk of modern slavery in our supply chains is led by the 'modern slavery in supply chains' working group. This group consists of management-level representatives from all the teams involved in working on our continuous improvement plan, including procurement, corporate governance and workforce policy. Our continuous improvement plan outlines the areas of our work that require further development and tracks our progress in those focus areas.

This statement was approved by the board of trustees at its meeting on 29 April 2025.

Elizabeth J. Padmore, chair of the board of trustees
(on behalf of the board)

Béatrice Butsana-Sita, chief executive officer

Clive MacTavish, chief finance officer
(on behalf of Britcross Limited)

¹ For more information on our fundamental principles please see: [redcross.org.uk/about-us/what-we-stand-for](https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/what-we-stand-for)

² For more information about National Societies, please see: [redcross.org.uk/about-us/how-we-are-run/the-international-movement](https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/how-we-are-run/the-international-movement)

³ Article 3, The Royal Charter of the British Red Cross Society.

⁴ For more information on the Movement's National Societies see [ifrc.org/who-we-are/international-red-cross-and-red-crescent-movement](https://www.ifrc.org/who-we-are/international-red-cross-and-red-crescent-movement)

⁵ Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, Preamble, Principle of Independence.

Our governance structure

**The British Red Cross has its head office in London.
In 2024, our total annual income was over £287.1 million⁶**

The British Red Cross is governed by a board of trustees whose role and functions are laid out in our Royal Charter and supplemented by standing orders which set out our rules of governance. The board is responsible for agreeing our overall strategic direction and is our highest decision-making body. It ensures that we are effective in working towards achieving our vision, using our resources to maximum effect and upholding our fundamental principles and values.

The board is supported by committees working with delegated authority in specific areas. These include the risk and assurance committee (RAC), which oversees risk management; and the donations acceptance committee (DAC), which is authorised by the board to examine and review offers of donations under the organisation’s ethical framework.

The board works closely with the executive leadership team (ELT), which has delegated responsibility for the day-to-day management of the organisation and is led by the chief executive officer. Together, the board and ELT oversee the implementation of our corporate strategy. This includes managing the governance of the organisation through

policies and procedures, which set out a clear framework for our activities and services.

The modern slavery in supply chains working group includes a named ELT sponsor to ensure oversight of the workplan and due consideration and mitigation of identified risks. The board approves the modern slavery statement annually.

The British Red Cross operates in nine British overseas territories. The Bermuda Red Cross, the Cayman Islands Red Cross, the British Virgin Islands Red Cross and the Turks and Caicos Islands Red Cross are locally incorporated and accounted for as subsidiaries. The Anguilla Red Cross, the Falklands Islands Red Cross, the Gibraltar Red Cross, the Montserrat Red Cross and the St Helena Red Cross are accounted for as branches.

Also included in the group accounts are the accounts of Britcross Limited, a wholly owned trading subsidiary, which donates its trading profits to the British Red Cross. This statement covers all our activities, including those of Britcross Limited.

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⁶ Over £287.1 million is our total income, and not our net income. Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Our supply chains and due diligence process

Progress in 2024

- A modern-slavery-related questionnaire has been added to the system, requiring suppliers to submit relevant information during the registration and tendering process. This ensures greater transparency and helps assess potential risks at an early stage.
- We continue to consolidate suppliers, reducing the number of engaged suppliers by 8% in 2024. The implementation of a new e-procurement system has strengthened our oversight, allowing for enhanced reporting, monitoring and risk assessment tools to improve supplier due diligence.
- Awareness of modern slavery risks among staff and volunteers has increased, with 100% completion of our Recognising and Responding to Human Trafficking e-module among critical teams connected to procurement. Internal tools for reporting modern slavery have also been further promoted to staff and volunteers.

Managing modern slavery risks in our supply chain

The British Red Cross employs a structured approach to procurement to identify and mitigate modern slavery risks. Our procurement operations primarily work with a high proportion of repeat suppliers based in UK, while our international operations use mainly one-off suppliers through new tenders for each supply requirement. To manage modern slavery risks effectively, our procurement policy applies across all teams, including:

- the corporate procurement team, which oversees suppliers for UK operations, and
- the international logistics team, which manages procurement for international programmes.

These teams collaborate to ensure supply chain integrity and compliance with ethical standards. Our internal Buying Better intranet site provides access to modern slavery training, information and reporting tools. Staff can report suspicions or incidents related to modern slavery through our Datix incident reporting system. It is accessible to all British Red Cross personnel and facilitates swift investigation and response.

Supplier Code of Conduct is a mandatory element of all contracts with suppliers in the UK. This policy ensures that:

- every supplier submitting a bid against a tender must sign the Supplier Code of Conduct, which mandates adherence to the Modern Slavery Act and proactive measures to prevent modern slavery in their supply chains, and
- our procurement gateway system prevents the registration of new suppliers unless they have signed the Supplier Code of Conduct.

To further strengthen our approach, we continue to:

- collaborate with sector colleagues and counterparts in the Charity Sector Procurement Group to share best practice and enhance due diligence measures,
- engage with stakeholders across the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to develop a consistent, coordinated approach to supplier due diligence, and
- leverage our new e-procurement system to enhance supplier risk assessment and compliance tracking.

By embedding modern slavery risk management into our procurement processes, we reinforce our commitment to ethical sourcing and responsible supply chain oversight.

Our policies covering human trafficking and modern slavery

Progress in 2024

The British Red Cross **Code of Conduct** maintains a zero-tolerance approach to any kind of exploitation, abuse or violence. It requires that any breach is reported and provides details on how to do so safely and anonymously.

In 2023, we reviewed and updated the Code of Conduct training, making it more accessible, and ensuring it is consistent with other learning modules. The training is mandatory for all staff, including contractors, consultants and volunteers. By the end of 2024, the Code of Conduct training had been completed by every member of the board, ELT and governance team. This represents:

- 98.5% of staff, compared to 97% in 2023
- 90.5% of volunteers, compared to 82% in 2023

In 2022, our **Dignity at Work Policy** and supporting procedure was put in place to enhance existing policies and procedures. The policy aims to ensure everyone is aware of the standards of behaviour expected of them, so that all of our people and beneficiaries are treated with dignity and respect. It also provides a clear framework to ensure that complaints of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with promptly and fairly. Further, it aims to help develop and maintain a safe and healthy working environment in which any form of disrespect, favouritism, harassment, bullying, discrimination or victimisation is unacceptable. After two years of addressing concerns through the Dignity at Work Policy, we will be updating it in 2025 to reflect lessons learned and feedback.

Following a review of our **Casual Worker Model** in 2022/23, a staff survey was sent to all existing casual workers to seek their views on a wide variety of issues, including working with the British Red Cross, their pay and benefits. The results of this survey will inform the work of the casual worker review working group, as it strives to ensure that our policies concerning casual workers are fair and consistent. This will help make sure casual workers are properly rewarded for the excellent work they do for our organisation and the people who use our services. A review of casual workers' pay, benefits and processes was unfortunately postponed in 2024, because the organisation decided to prioritise transformation programmes. However, the review is part of the **reward and people experience team's workplan for 2025**.

For the list of all our relevant policies, please refer to Annex 1.



Safeguarding

Safeguarding at the British Red Cross is how we prevent and respond to concerns of abuse, exploitation and harm to the children, adults and communities who come into contact with us or our partners.

Progress in 2024

An external review at the end of 2023 validated our ongoing safeguarding work and helped prioritise certain activities. With that in mind, we developed an organisational action plan, driving our activities throughout 2024.

- We are continuously developing and expanding our safeguarding representatives' networks across the organisation. Currently, we have a network of safeguarding representatives in the UK and internationally. We are now focusing on developing a network specifically for our retail operations.
- We developed a youth-led version of the safeguarding policy. We updated the International, Adult and Children Safeguarding procedures and guidance documents. And we produced guidance to help teams recognise professional boundaries, issues and respond appropriately.
- The mandatory safeguarding training was revised and relaunched, with staff and volunteers updating their learning. Two specialised international safeguarding training courses were also developed: an e-module and a three-day in-person course for staff in the international directorate.

Our involvement with initiatives and collaborations

The British Red Cross helped draft and subsequently signed an international safeguarding pledge for the Movement. The organisation also endorsed the Common Approach to Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (CPSEAH) in 2024. We continued to provide bi-annual data to the Core Humanitarian Standards SEAH Harmonised Reporting Scheme to understand the scale of safeguarding issues across the sector. The British Red Cross participates in the Misconduct Disclosure Scheme as part of our safer recruitment efforts.

Between January 2024 and December 2024, our safeguarding advice team provided support and guidance on **24 concerns of modern slavery** reported by operational teams across the organisation. These concerns related to incidents identified by our staff during our service delivery (as opposed to in our supply chains), mainly involving people who use our services. We report our holistic safeguarding responses in our **annual trustees' report and accounts**.⁷

⁷ <https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/how-we-are-run/finances/annual-reports-and-accounts>

Training and guidance for our people

Progress in 2024

- We continued to update our **introductory e-module (module one)** for internal staff and volunteers – ‘recognising and responding to human trafficking’ – to ensure it remains up to date and relevant. The module provides an introduction on how to identify and respond to potential incidents of modern slavery and trafficking, and is aimed at all staff and volunteers. The revised training includes new case studies applicable to a wider range of services, and examples of trafficking in times of emergency. It was launched in February 2025.

In 2024, this introductory e-module was completed 384 times. At the date of this statement, 100% of staff working in community equipment service (CES) purchasing; corporate procurement; international logistics; the professional services management team; the internal audit and counter fraud team; the health and safety team; and the international security team have completed the training.

- We continued to promote **advanced training (module two)** for British Red Cross refugee support teams providing casework support. It is specifically aimed at **refugee support caseworkers**. This blended learning package provides information and advice on how to address the needs of trafficked people and help them navigate very complex systems. Our independence and neutrality, which are two of our fundamental principles, help us provide non-directive information, enabling people to make their own informed choices.

In 2024, online training in anti-trafficking casework skills was completed 61 times. We also continued to run our virtual classroom casework skills training – delivering it to 47 people during the year.⁸

We continued to promote our **global e-module** on human trafficking: ‘understanding and responding to trafficking in persons’. It aims to improve the ability of Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers to recognise and respond to trafficking. **In 2024, 156 people completed this training.**

We designed and delivered a variety of bitesize learning and ‘community of practice’ sessions, to enable staff and volunteers to better understand trafficking and know how to respond.

- A **bitesize learning session** was delivered to eight people in the South West refugee support team, providing a refresher of anti-trafficking information and a chance to discuss trends.
- A **‘community of practice’ session** was held for 10 learners in the Ukraine response team to provide an anti-trafficking refresher and discuss tailored case studies.
- As part of the **City Bridge funded project**, two bitesize learning sessions were delivered to London-based teams to raise awareness of human trafficking, including an open section for professionals to ask the anti-trafficking team facilitators advice about cases they are dealing with.
- A **bitesize learning session** was delivered to 19 young refugees to equip them to spot the signs of trafficking and understand how to seek support.

Guidance developed with external partners on the rights and entitlements of survivors of trafficking within asylum support was updated to incorporate significant changes in legislation and policy. The updated guidance will be rolled out externally in early 2025.

We continued to integrate trafficking considerations into other training, such as a young refugees e-module. Our international staff are required to complete mandatory British Red Cross safeguarding training, which includes an e-module on the Code of Conduct and safeguarding children and adults (available on our learning platform).

⁸ Please note that 2024 completion figures for e-module 1, e-module 2 and module 2 remote classroom training may include some learners who have previously completed the training.

International mandatory training

We introduced a new e-module in 2024 to help learners understand safeguarding in the international humanitarian context and how to apply the 4 Rs: recognise, respect, respond and report.

Guidance

We know clear frameworks will enable our people to respond consistently and appropriately. We have guidance advising them on the ways to log suspicions or actual incidents related to modern slavery using our incident reporting system, Datix. All our people have access to Datix and can report an incident or concern requiring further investigation. To support our frontline staff, we have developed internal anti-trafficking guidance documents aimed at various audiences within our organisation. We keep our guidance documents under active review to ensure they are up to date and address any new needs and emerging trends within the anti-trafficking sector. Our guidance documents include:

- a casework field guide for our frontline practitioners.
- an anti-trafficking pocket guide containing key indicators and contact details for the safeguarding team.
- newly updated operational guidance on how the British Red Cross responds to requests from police for support in anti-trafficking operations in reception centres. In 2025 we will roll out the training programme to accompany this guidance.
- guidance on the legal rights and entitlements of survivors of trafficking, for internal and external caseworkers. The draft version of this guidance has been used to inform briefings, training and second-tier advice. It will be revised to include recent legislative changes and we will launch it in 2025.

Movement-wide training module

The e-module **understanding and responding to trafficking in persons**, which was developed in 2020, provides an introduction to trafficking for Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers. We led and funded the development of the e-module in partnership with the Australian Red Cross and the IFRC. The global working group included staff and consultation with survivors. The e-module aims to increase the ability of Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers to recognise and respond to trafficking. It continues to be actively promoted at the global level throughout the Movement in English, French, Spanish and Arabic, with 20% of completions in 2024 in Spanish. User-engagement metrics are regularly reviewed to measure the impact and reach of the e-module and respond to regional requests to tailor it to local contexts.

Next steps

We will continue to build in this work and have identified the following priorities for 2025.

We intend to:

- Increase awareness of our internal tools for reporting modern slavery risks in our supply chains among our staff and volunteers.
- Continue to develop and improve oversight of our procurement processes to identify and mitigate the risk of modern slavery in our supply chains. This includes identifying higher risk suppliers, and developing key performance indicators to track and monitor our progress.
- Continue to consolidate suppliers where possible and require new suppliers to sign up to our Supplier Code of Conduct through our e-procurement platform and the 'new supplier creation' process.
- Launch and promote revised trafficking awareness training across the organisation. We will also review training products and ensure they continue to align with the learning needs of frontline caseworkers and staff who may identify modern slavery risks connected with our supply chain.
- Continue to monitor and promote the global e-module 'understanding and responding to trafficking in persons' in English, French, Spanish and Arabic.
- Build on our work with the IFRC to develop a Movement-wide approach to procurement.
- Work with our colleagues at the British Red Cross and across the wider Red Cross Red Crescent Movement to investigate where we could enhance our due diligence procedures.

Annex 1

Workplan

Aligned to our modern slavery workplan, we have due diligence processes in place to reduce the risk of modern slavery in our supply chain. This includes monitoring against our key performance indicators to help us track progress on identifying and mitigating modern slavery risks. This table sets out our progress.	
Areas of focus	Progress in 2024
We continue to ask landlords to sign our Supplier Code of Conduct at the point of new leases or renewal.	At the point of lease renewal or acquisition, over 85% of landlords have signed the code of conduct. Where they have refused, most often due to already having their own code in place, an exemption to proceed has been approved by the CEO on a case-by-case risk assessment. In 2024, 10% of property landlords required this exemption to proceed.
Supply chain management is a dynamic process. Between our purchasing and procurement team we continue to work on supplier consolidation .	<p>In 2024, we achieved a reduction of 17% of the number of suppliers in the £50k to £100k category.</p> <p>Our organisation undertook a transformation programme in 2024, which will ultimately allow us to strengthen our internal practices and improve due diligence processes.</p> <p>Following the suspension of our Sedex membership, the procurement team is actively seeking ways to carry out due diligence checks beyond self-certification.</p>
As part of our due diligence, we check if a company or private donor has its own modern slavery statement. We also seek to identify any accusations, press coverage and lawsuits associated with the company connected to modern slavery.	All significant donations, partnerships, sponsorships and gifts-in-kind continue to be screened. We did not identify any modern slavery issues during this process in 2024 and therefore did not decline any opportunities on this basis.
We have a large number of partnerships and organisations to which we provide grants, particularly overseas. We are working with the IFRC to explore a Movement-wide approach to due diligence to help identify modern slavery risks that may arise as a result of such partnerships and/or grants.	<p>In 2024, our international logistics and supply chain team trained several partner National Societies and the IFRC on conducting supplier due diligence through the British Red Cross contracted online platform and expanded access to more National Societies.</p> <p>We also supported two training sessions on surge procurement designed for National Society procurement nominees. They showed participants how to use the new IFRC procurement Enterprise Resource Planning module – a system that will streamline IFRC buying activities.</p>
We identified that awareness of modern slavery and our organisational response was necessary for people working across varied roles, including those involved in purchasing for their own services or operation. We have therefore agreed with specific teams they will complete our e-module to help them understand trafficking, to recognise the signs, and respond safely and appropriately to human trafficking.	<p>Our e-modules were completed 384 times in 2024*. Every single member of staff in the following critical teams has completed the training and we encourage new team members to complete it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Community equipment service purchasing- Corporate procurement- International logistics- Professional services management team;- Health and safety team;- International security team- Internal audit and counter fraud team

Annex 2

Relevant policies

Policies and procedures, and related training, are instrumental to supporting people in crisis, including those experiencing modern slavery and human trafficking.

The British Red Cross implements a policy and procedure framework, which sets clear standards for developing, reviewing and approving policy and procedures. The framework is also designed to:

- facilitate compliance with external legislation
- established regulatory requirements and/or standards set by donors, partners and/or commissioning organisations

- ensure British Red Cross staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities
- capture the specific risk of modern slavery and trafficking in our supply chains or in any part of our work.

When the Modern Slavery Act was first introduced, we reviewed and updated key policies, procedures and corporate documents, including our handbook for staff and related training modules. We also ensured our policy on raising a concern (whistleblowing) covered modern slavery risks, and our commitment to maintaining the highest standards of conduct and ethical behaviour.

Policy/Procedure	Details	Last updated or reviewed
British Red Cross Code of Conduct	Applies to all staff and volunteers. States clearly that we have zero tolerance for any kind of exploitation, abuse or violence. Requires that any breach is reported and provides details on how to do so.	Last reviewed April 2022. Next review due April 2025.
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Procedure	This policy document sets out our commitment to making our organisation a safe and welcoming place, where everyone feels valued. It outlines how we intend to work together to remove barriers, treat everyone fairly, and make sure no one working, volunteering or being supported by the British Red Cross faces discrimination.	Policy last reviewed June 2023. Next review due June 2026.
Employee Handbook	Applies to all staff. Sets out our expectations for ethical behaviour. It also outlines our commitment to ensuring the effective prevention of slavery and human trafficking in both our supply chains and corporate activities.	Last updated in November 2022.
Incident Reporting Policy and Procedure	Applies to all staff and volunteers – including agency, temporary staff and contractors – who undertake activities or provide services for the British Red Cross in any capacity, whether working in the UK or internationally. The policy underpins the framework for the effective reporting of incidents, accidents and near misses to protect our people, resources, operations and those who use our services.	Policy last reviewed May 2024. Next review due May 2027.
Procurement Policy and Procedure	Provides a robust due diligence framework, incorporating the Supplier Code of Conduct, to ensure all procurement and purchasing activities are performed inline with our commitment to both ethical purchasing and the Modern Slavery Act 2015.	Policy last reviewed January 2024. Next review due January 2027.
Raising a Concern Policy and Procedure	<p>Applies to all employees, consultants, self-employed contractors, casual and agency workers, agency staff, delegates and interns based in the UK or overseas.</p> <p>Sets out the expectation that our people will speak up when they observe or suspect wrongdoing. Explains the process for reporting concerns, including how to do so anonymously. Reportable concerns include those involving our supply chains and/or any circumstances that may give rise to increased risk of slavery or human trafficking.</p>	Last reviewed November 2022. Next review due November 2025.

Policy/Procedure	Details	Last updated or reviewed
Volunteer Complaints, Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedure	These documents outline the procedure for addressing complaints, issues or concerns raised by, or about, volunteers in the organisation. Included is a comprehensive approach that aims to provide a fair and transparent system for managing volunteer-related issues across all areas of the organisation.	Last reviewed December 2022. Next review due December 2025.
Recruitment and Selection of Staff Procedure (including agency workers)	Details the expectation that recruitment and selection is conducted in accordance with the highest ethical standards and in compliance with employment and equality legislation.	Last reviewed April 2017. Next review due March 2025.
Safeguarding Policy Safeguarding Children Procedure, Safeguarding Adults Procedure, International Safeguarding Procedure	Sets out how we fulfil our obligations and handle concerns about safeguarding children and adults who are (or are at risk of) being abused. This includes risks associated with modern slavery and trafficking, which are cited as two of our key safeguarding concerns. Our new accompanying safeguarding processes support our people to recognise, respond to, report and record concerns of abuse or harm to children and adults at risk.	Policy last reviewed December 2023. Next review due December 2026.
Transparency and Accountability Policy	Details how we will publish information on our structure and operations, enhance transparency and enable stakeholders to evaluate our performance in delivering to people in crisis. It includes our commitment to publish our modern slavery statement annually on our website.	Last reviewed May 2022. Next review due May 2025.
Fundraising Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure	Applies to all staff and volunteers when fundraising. Sets out the quality assurance framework they should follow to ensure our activities are complying with internal and external standards, including (as appropriate) measures to ensure we are complying with standards around modern slavery.	Policy last reviewed October 2023. Next review due October 2026.
Overarching Ethical Policy	Sets out our expectation that, when initiating significant new activities and/or partnerships, decisions will be informed by applying best practice due diligence assessments to ensure they meet both our charitable objectives and ethical standards.	Last reviewed January 2021. Currently under review.
Professional Boundaries Procedure	Details the requirement that relationships between people who use our services, and our staff and volunteers, are appropriately established and maintained, and take into account the relative power differences. Professional boundaries protect everyone involved and ensure those who come into contact with us receive accessible services and are treated with respect and dignity at all times.	Last reviewed December 2024. Next review due December 2027.
Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure	Sets out the standards of behaviour expected from staff and volunteers, so that all our people and beneficiaries are treated with dignity and respect. It also provides a clear framework to ensure that complaints of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with promptly and fairly. It aims to help develop and maintain a safe and healthy working environment in which any form of disrespect, favouritism, harassment, bullying, discrimination or victimisation is unacceptable.	Policy launched in August 2022. Next review due August 2025.

Annex 3

Our anti-trafficking work across our UK and international programmes

Strategy 2030 commits us to restoring safety and dignity for people who are displaced, focusing on the most urgent cases of need. The British Red Cross has a dedicated anti-trafficking team to ensure the organisation safely responds to survivors of trafficking wherever we encounter them in our work. Our team mission is to improve recognition and support for anyone who has been trafficked or exploited. We believe that providing the right information at the right time to survivors of trafficking enables them to make informed choices about their future. We also use this insight to help inform activities that reduce the risks of trafficking, so that fewer people are exploited.

Our activities have three pillars:

- direct support to survivors
- capacity building within the British Red Cross and the wider Movement
- influencing for a humanitarian response to trafficking.

Our work in the UK

Our response is underpinned by our guiding principles. We focus on:

- providing **care and support** to survivors of trafficking and encouraging the sector to focus on protecting trafficked people and putting survivors' needs at the centre of any response
- **filling gaps in the provision** of statutory support and advocating for continuous improvements to the national response so that trafficked people receive the help they need
- **working in partnership** and through partners to strengthen the sector's response to trafficking and supporting other relevant organisations to carry out their important work
- **working with survivors to make their own informed choices**, supporting them in the decisions they make and enabling them to increase their resilience

Direct support

Our anti-trafficking team offer casework support to survivors of trafficking at various stages of their exit from exploitation. We offer:

- initial support when people are considering leaving/have just left exploitation
- support while people are accessing key systems – such as the National Referral Mechanism, and the asylum system – and need advocacy and additional assistance
- longer-term support beyond the National Referral Mechanism or outside of statutory provision if the survivor has not engaged with the authorities.

The British Red Cross tailors its support to trafficking survivors who may also be engaging with the asylum process.

To access our support, someone does not need to be engaging with the authorities, or consent to enter the National Referral Mechanism. We focus on helping people understand all their options so they can make informed choices about their next steps.

As well as the direct support of our specialist anti-trafficking team, the British Red Cross supports survivors, in close collaboration with the anti-trafficking team, in the following ways:

- Supporting refugees

Our refugee support teams come across people who have been trafficked into or around the UK, or who are vulnerable to being trafficked. Our refugee support teams provide immediate assistance and offer one-to-one casework to help individuals navigate systems in the UK, access essential services and understand their rights. These services vary around the UK depending on local need and gaps in provision.

As the largest independent provider of support to people seeking asylum and refugees in the UK, the British Red Cross has specific expertise in the trafficking and asylum nexus, and how both these systems and experiences can impact people.

– Reconnecting families

People who are trafficked are often separated from their families, and sometimes unable to find them. If survivors of trafficking choose to try reconnect with their families, the anti-trafficking team works with the international family tracing team to help them search safely for their loved ones.

– Reception centres

Our crisis and emergency response teams answer requests from police for support in anti-trafficking operations, both in reception centres and in response to ad-hoc requests for practical support. We support when the purpose of the reception centre is to identify survivors of trafficking and safeguard people who are at risk or have been exploited. This can include providing emotional and psychosocial support, as well as practical assistance such as clothing, blankets, cash assistance and hygiene packs. We also coordinate closely with voluntary sector organisations and signpost people to relevant local and national support for those who need it. In 2024 we revised our operational guidance to reflect new legislation, learning and best practice. This included incorporating the recommendations and minimum standards set out in our 2020 report *First Steps to Safety?* on the role of reception centres in helping people out of exploitation. In 2024, our crisis and emergency response teams across the UK responded to 17 incidents and supported 101 service users.

Capacity building

Training

Our training aims to ensure that more of our people are aware of trafficking, can spot the signs, and know how to use the internal referral pathway to raise or report a concern. Anyone working or volunteering at the British Red Cross might encounter someone who has been trafficked. Or they could find themselves representing the organisation in multi-agency meetings and be asked about trafficking-related activities. Therefore, our introductory training and guidance are designed to help our frontline staff and volunteers confidently respond to any signs of trafficking and escalate their concerns to staff with specialist knowledge.

We also provide specialist anti-trafficking training and resources for our refugee support caseworkers, equipping them with the skills and knowledge to support survivors. When required, we design and deliver bespoke training for teams with additional training needs, enabling them to respond to survivors of trafficking within their service.

For full details of all our training products and activities please refer to page 7.

Guidance development

We understand our people need up-to-date guidance to ensure they are carrying out their work accurately and appropriately. The anti-trafficking team produces field guides, information sheets, pocket guides and other tools to ensure the right information is always available to people working and volunteering with our organisation. Insights from direct work with survivors led to deeper research and practical solutions to increase our capacity to influence and achieve better outcomes for survivors. Some examples of this are:

- Survivor feedback routinely emphasised the value of a casework approach that centred on informing them of their entitlements and listening to their perspective on how they would like to access them. We recognised that this survivor-centred approach aligned well with the organisation's commitment to a trauma-informed response.
- Our [At Risk report](#), produced with the UN refugee agency, identified that survivors in the asylum system routinely had their needs, vulnerabilities and ongoing risks to their safety overlooked by statutory and support organisations.
- As part of our Foster Action and Support to Trafficked Persons (FAST) project, we commissioned legal guidance with sector partners to support frontline caseworkers in navigating support for survivors, both in the asylum and National Referral Mechanism processes. This guidance will help close the gap between survivors' entitlements and how those rights are achieved. In 2025, we aim to produce a leaflet to put this information directly into the hands of survivors.

Professional advice

The anti-trafficking team also offers professional advice and support to people across our organisation who might encounter a survivor of trafficking in their work. We often advise on complex cases with intersecting protection concerns, including child protection, sexual and gender-based violence and trafficking. We support our people to respond to trafficking safely and to appropriately involve relevant professionals across the organisation and beyond.

We operate an internal phone line and inbox where we receive queries and requests for support and advice. **In the last 12 months, the team have recorded 147 instances of advice provided to professionals.**

Our work overseas

Strengthening the capacity of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to recognise and respond to human trafficking

For several years, the British Red Cross has been at the forefront of strengthening the Movement-wide response to trafficking, drawing on our operational experience in the UK. We've worked with International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement staff and volunteers across the world, building their capacity to safely respond to trafficking, integrate trafficking considerations into existing programmes and develop projects that take into account the risk of trafficking.

Humanitarian crises including natural disasters, conflict and forced displacement can lead to an increase in, and new forms of, trafficking. Our focus is to **strengthen the capacity of the Movement** so that we are prepared to safely respond to indicators and disclosures of trafficking. Our anti-trafficking offer is comprehensive. It encompasses a variety of activities, from implementing minimum standards to developing specialist support services. Our work is guided by context-specific requirements, gaps and capabilities. We engage with National Societies and the IFRC in the Middle East and North Africa, Europe, Asia and Africa to **share learning and promote interventions aimed at reducing risks and responding to trafficking**, especially in migration and displacement contexts, inline with our 2030 strategy.

For example, the British Red Cross was early to recognise how the escalation of conflict in Ukraine would increase the risk of trafficking. As a result, the British Red Cross scaled up its efforts to support the IFRC and National Societies in Ukraine and neighbouring countries to better understand the risk of trafficking and how to safely respond. We gave specific attention to at-risk groups, such as unaccompanied children, people with disabilities and minority groups, including third-country nationals living in Ukraine. Since the outbreak of the conflict, we have trained staff and volunteers in how to identify and deal with trafficking. We've developed contextualised prevention materials to inform communities of their rights, and how to access services. We are now working closely with the Europe regional team and IFRC to integrate anti-trafficking into longer-term programmes in the region, with a focus on supporting the Romanian Red Cross.

British Red Cross also works to foster **peer learning and collaboration** between National Societies on trafficking prevention and response. We are a co-chair of the European Red Cross Action for Trafficked Persons Network, a community of practice for European National Societies. In 2024 we:

- facilitated an online session with the Red Cross EU Office and IFRC to discuss how human trafficking is reflected in two key documents, the Migration Strategy and the Protection Resolution. This was discussed at the Red Cross Red Crescent Council of Delegates and 34th International Conference
- convened the annual meeting of the network in Lisbon, which provided an opportunity for discussion on regional trafficking trends, challenges and innovations
- developed a pledge on human trafficking open for all National Societies to sign. The joint pledge 'responding to human trafficking across all our operational activity' was launched at the 34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

We also administrate the Trafficking Response Hub, an initiative to share resources and knowledge about human trafficking and safe migration among the IFRC and National Societies.

Our wider impact

External engagement

We work closely with our partners across the UK to ensure that our responses to trafficking are relevant and focused on gaps in provision, and that we are not duplicating services. We participate in multi-agency partnerships and help promote and strengthen these where we can. We believe that any effective trafficking response needs cross-sectoral collaboration and the involvement of multiple stakeholders.

National and international advocacy

We take part in Movement-wide and external, international and national networks and working groups, where we work strategically to inform policy and share best practice. We monitor and support policy changes aimed at improved identification and services for survivors, and measures to reduce the risk of trafficking by increasing safe and legal migration routes.

The British Red Cross is also a member of the International Anti-Human Trafficking Network. The network maintains relationships between UK-based organisations working globally in the anti-trafficking sector, so they can collaborate, share best practice, and advocate for development in the sector with one amplified voice. The network also maintains a close relationship with the Modern Slavery Engagement Forum to influence government policy.

Advocacy, research and reports

In the UK, our anti-trafficking team has a decade's experience of service, which provides us with key learning about people's specific needs. Insights from this have been used for our research and recommendations, which have focused on:

- initial support when people first leave exploitation
- access to longer term support after people exit the National Referral Mechanism
- the experience of people who are trafficked, but who are also seeking asylum.

Please refer to page 16 for an overview of projects and reports.

Timeline of British Red Cross anti-trafficking Work in the UK and around the world

2015	<p>The PROTECT project (2014 – 2016) led by the British Red Cross, working with the Croatian Red Cross, International Centre for Migration Policy Development, and the Office of Human Rights and National Minorities in Croatia, aimed at developing capacities to recognise and support survivors.</p> <p>Through PROTECT, the British Red Cross launched: 'E-module 1: Recognising trafficked people', internal training for all staff and volunteers; and 'Module 2: Assisting trafficked people' a blended learning package, plus a field guide for refugee support.</p> <p>The British Red Cross signed a joint pledge responding to human trafficking of migrants in Europe.</p> <p>The British Red Cross-led Your Space programme offered specialist support to people leaving exploitative situations.</p>
2018	<p>Development of 10 core principles for early support for trafficking survivors in close collaboration with the Human Trafficking Foundation, the Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group and the Anti Trafficking and Labour Exploitation Unit.</p> <p>TRACKS project focused on identifying trafficking and survivors' needs within European asylum systems, leading to a EU comparative report, UK findings report and the UK toolbox.</p>
2019	<p>Collaborative work with Hestia and Ashiana on a project focused on care provided to survivors exiting the National Referral Mechanism, leading to the Hope for the Future report.</p>
2020	<p>Implementation of the e-module 'understanding and responding to trafficking in persons' led and funded by the British Red Cross, in partnership with the Australian Red Cross and the IFRC.</p>
2021	<p>The FAST project, led by the British Red Cross in cooperation with the Italian Red Cross, the Netherlands Red Cross, CNOS FAP, the International Rescue Committee, and the Greek Council aimed at improved trafficking prevention and support for the potential victims and survivors.</p>
2022	<p>Publication of a report by the British Red Cross and UNHCR, At risk: Exploitation and the UK asylum system, sought to draw attention to the specific difficulties people seeking asylum face in the UK.</p> <p>The British Red Cross led the anti-trafficking response to the conflict in Ukraine, supporting IFRC and National Societies in Ukraine and neighbouring countries with awareness raising and training.</p> <p>The British Red Cross worked in partnership with the Danish Red Cross and the Sudanese Red Crescent on a programme focusing on anti-trafficking, gender-based violence prevention and psychosocial support for vulnerable women and girls.</p>
2023	<p>We provided technical assistance to Ethiopia's project on human trafficking, focused on young returnee survivors of trafficking and young migrants.</p> <p>We supported Libya's protection programme by incorporating anti-trafficking technical support, including capacity building, psychosocial support, and healthcare for migrants and local communities.</p> <p>We hosted a webinar for the IFRC Europe Protection Gender and Inclusion network to mark Anti-Slavery Day.</p> <p>We delivered anti-trafficking training to the Romanian Red Cross.</p>
2024	<p>We delivered anti-trafficking training to the Hellenic Red Cross.</p> <p>We chaired the annual meeting of the Action for Trafficked Persons Network in Lisbon and developed a new joint pledge with the Action for Trafficked Persons Network: Joint Pledge – Responding to Human Trafficking across all our operational activity.</p> <p>We spoke on the panel for a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) expert group meeting on 'Countering labour exploitation in Trafficking in Persons, including trafficking caused by displacement caused by armed conflicts.</p>

