

## **Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement**

### **1. Opening Statement From Senior Management**

Equity Housing Group (EHG) and its subsidiaries, seek to ensure compliance with its obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. EHG is committed to preventing acts of modern slavery and human trafficking within its business and supply chain, and insist of the same high standards from its suppliers and partner organisations.

### **2. Structure of the Organisation**

EHG is a Housing Association whose principle activities are the development and management of social housing. In addition through its subsidiaries it also provides an estate agency and coffee shop. For the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, Equity Housing Group's turnover is circa. £25 million. The Equity Housing Group Structure consists of Equity Housing Group Limited and Equity Enterprises Limited as operating businesses.

Equity Housing Group Limited is a charitable registered society under the Co-Operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and is also a registered provider of social housing with the Home and Communities Agency. Equity Enterprises Limited is a limited liability Company incorporated under the Companies Act 2006.

### **3. Supply Chains and Areas of Risk**

EHG's supply chain predominately consists of services as opposed to goods, with the highest risk areas being associated with our building and maintenance activity. Equity Housing Group does not have a supply chain outside of the United Kingdom.

EHG may also come across slavery and/or human trafficking in connection with the vulnerable people we support, in particular those from a minority background or socially excluded groups, who may be subject to forced labour and/or domestic servitude and potentially in connection with our workforce. Accommodation provided by EHG could also be a potential venue for modern slavery.

In order to mitigate this risk, EHG attempts to ensure that its homes and properties are let to bona fide individuals and companies, where photographic identity checks amongst others are carried out at the point of tenancy. In addition these are followed-up by regular visits to our properties, where any reports of suspicious activities within our housing stock is investigated by our Customer Services Team.

Where we have identified a potential risk, these risks can be investigated, remediated and mitigated through activities such as due diligence, improved procurement practices and industry collaboration.

### **4. Policy**

The Modern Slavery Act requires that organisations take steps to address modern slavery and human trafficking in their business and supply chains. We have published this statement voluntarily, setting out what we have done to recognise and prevent potential incidences of modern slavery.

### **5. Policies and Procedures**

As part of our efforts to monitor and reduce the risk of slavery and human trafficking occurring within our business, we have adopted the following policies and procedures.

- Set the tone from the top down through Board level communication reinforcing the organisations zero tolerance towards modern slavery.
- Ensure that our procurement policy is designed to ensure that we operate in a legal, ethical and inclusive manner whilst achieving best value for money.

- Ensure that our whistleblowing procedures cover modern slavery reporting, whilst encouraging all employees to report wrongdoing or any behaviour which is or appears to be suspicious.
- Adopting a modern slavery policy and supplier code of conduct and/or modifying existing policies and codes.
- Ensuring that EHG Recruitment and Selection policy contains the relevant requirements in terms of checking eligibility to work in the UK and carrying out any necessary DBS checks.

## **6. Training**

Equity Housing Group continues to educate our staff in recognising the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking in our business. Employees are encouraged to identify and report any incidents of Modern Slavery or any suspicious activity. Employees are reminded of the benefits of stringent measures to tackle slavery and human trafficking, as well as the consequences of failing to eradicate slavery and human trafficking from our business and supply chain.

## **7. Monitoring Effectiveness**

Equity Housing Group uses relevant management information to measure how successful we have been in ensuring that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any part of our business or supply chain.

## **8. Sign Off**

This statement is made in accordance with section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes Equity Housing Group's slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending March 2019.