



MODERN SLAVERY & HUMAN TRAFFICKING  
TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

JANUARY 2020 – DECEMBER 2020



DE VERE



## **MODERN SLAVERY & HUMAN TRAFFICKING TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT**

**January 2020 – December 2020**

This statement is our Fifth issue of our Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Transparency Statement and relates to actions and activities during the financial year 1st January 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. It should be noted that this year was severely disrupted with all of the Group's hotels closing in March 2020 as a Government requirement, for a minimum period of five months as a result of the Corona Virus pandemic, many however stayed closed for the remainder of the financial year. These closures and government restrictions limited our ability to access our suppliers and our staff, noting also however that procurement activity was extremely low as was the number of guests that stayed within the Group's portfolio as a result of the closures.

We welcome the opportunity to publish this statement confirming our ongoing commitment for the prevention against slavery and human trafficking. Each year we continue to explore all opportunities to improve our practices and learn from industry trends and other best practice initiatives.

De Vere acknowledges its responsibilities under the Modern Slavery Act 2015, making a voluntary commitment to ensure acts of slavery, human trafficking, child and sexual exploitation do not occur across its operating businesses, and those within its suppliers of goods and services.

The Group will not knowingly support or deal with any business involved in slavery, human trafficking and child or sexual exploitation.

This policy statement has been reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors and will be reviewed and published annually.

This statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes our Group's slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

**James Burrell**  
**Chief Financial Officer**



## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Board of Directors has overall responsibility for ensuring this policy complies with our legal and ethical obligations. This includes, but is not limited to, preventing the use of Group premises for the sexual exploitation of adults and children; recruitment of employees or agency workers via unauthorised agencies or subcontracts and the purchasing of goods or services from non-approved suppliers, exposing the Group to the potential risk of indirectly supporting unethical employment practices such as forced or bonded labour.

The success of this policy and the delivery of our objectives will be supported by the General Manager and their Senior Team of each respective Hotel or Venue; this commitment is a condition of employment for all new Managers and Executives of the Group.

All colleagues are required to support and promote the Group's commitment to Anti-Slavery & Human Trafficking prevention measures.



## **OUR BUSINESS AND STRUCTURE**

The Company operates the trading brand of De Vere which consists of 16 directly managed properties and 1 property operated by way of a Management Contract. At the end of December 2020 the Group employed 1313 operational colleagues and 43 Central Head Office Support colleagues.

Further details of the operating companies in existence at the end of the financial year 2020 can be found in the Appendix to this statement. The parent company of the Group is Principal Hotels Topco 1 Limited.

## **OUR SUPPLY CHAINS**

The Company has relationships with external businesses to support the running of the hotels and venues as follows:

- Arrangements to supply agency workers to supplement hotel staffing needs, as and when required.
- Arrangements for the supply of goods and services (some by contractors) to the hotels.

At the time of publishing this statement in excess of 90% of our supply chain spend is now with agents, wholesalers, distributors and producers who are based in the UK and Northern Island. In line with our future objectives this will become a standard new supplier criteria and it is now our intention to extend this to 100% of our existing supply chain by 2022.



## **POLICIES & PROCEDURES RELATING TO THE PREVENTION OF MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

Our principal policy is one of a Zero Tolerance approach to modern slavery and human trafficking. Upon identification of an incident or suspicion of activity which could be construed as modern slavery and human trafficking we will work with all interested parties to ensure that the appropriate action is taken and preventative measures adopted to reduce the likelihood of a reoccurrence.

As part of the Group's due diligence processes to avoid slavery and human trafficking, a number of policies and procedures exist. These include, but are not limited to:

### **ETHICAL RECRUITMENT POLICY**

The requirement of the HR teams and those colleagues who are delegated the responsibility for the recruitment of colleagues, to understand their responsibilities correctly by carrying out 'right to work' checks, and therefore ensure legal compliance. This requires full ID checks to take place including passports and, where relevant, work permits. This process is audited annually.

As part of the Group's due diligence, all potential providers of agency workers are required to complete and sign a declaration confirming that they are fully compliant with the requirement of UK Immigration legislation and the Modern Slavery Act. This necessitates agency worker providers to respond to set questions to which responses are assessed to ensure 100% compliance before approving providers of agency workers.

A central register of Agencies has been created which when initially set up involved holding face to face meetings with all agency worker suppliers and recruitment agencies. The purpose of these meetings was to reinforce the Company's policy, ensure full understanding and compliance with their obligations and to reinforce the Group's zero tolerance approach to modern slavery and human trafficking. Following these meeting each approved Agency has signed a Service Level Agreement to further confirm their compliance with the Modern Day Slavery Act.



## WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

The Group at all times conducts its business with the highest standards of integrity and honesty. It expects all colleagues to maintain the same standards in everything they do. Colleagues are therefore encouraged to report any wrongdoing by the Group or its colleagues that falls short of these business principles. To support this, a totally confidential and independent whistleblowing call service continues to be available to all colleagues.

Whilst primarily directed at our colleagues, the policy also supports and encourages all stakeholders, including suppliers and business partners to disclose any concerns they may have without fear of retribution.

## MANAGEMENT OF SUPPLIERS TO PREVENT MODERN SLAVERY WITHIN THE SUPPLY CHAIN

All potential suppliers are required to complete a 'New Supplier Questionnaire' as part of the process to seek approval to supply the Group. This includes the requirement to confirm their compliance with the Modern Slavery Act. In addition, potential suppliers must agree to the Group's right to inspect their premises, manufacturing, processing and storage facilities. Audits are performed on a random basis on the Group's behalf to review all aspects of the supply chain, including safety, working practices and other legal requirements.

## MODERN DAY SLAVERY & HUMAN TRAFFICKING TRAINING POLICY

The Group recognises that Hotels may be used as temporary accommodation to aid the exploitation of vulnerable adults and children. All Hotels and Venues operate a structured blended learning programme for colleagues working in areas of the hotel where they may encounter instances involving slavery, human trafficking or sexual exploitation, i.e. Reception and Nights, Housekeeping and Duty/Senior Management. Awareness training is provided at induction and refreshed annually. We remain committed to identifying and providing new training materials and new technologies to aid a continuous improvement in colleague awareness.



**HOTEL AND VENUES**

**EMPLOYEES**

**GOOD AND SERVICES**

**RISKS:**

As a hotel business we recognise that our services may be used to exploit vulnerable adults and children, by moving them through the hotel or holding them against their will within bedroom accommodation for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

**RISKS:**

Some of our properties will be more reliant upon Agency Resource to support our existing colleagues, particularly during busy trading periods. With a geographic spread we use a number of employment agencies / outsource services making it more difficult to constantly monitor their recruitment practices.

**RISKS:**

With products and services sourced from around the world there is a possibility that unethical working practice including poor working conditions, welfare and pay may exist within some aspects of the supply chain; particularly during the manufacturing process.

**ESTABLISHED ARRANGEMENTS:**

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for checking in guests. Amended and enhanced in 2018 to include validation of the relationship between a child and parent/guardian checking in together if concerns arise

SOP for late night/short lead/ walk in bookings updated to include a requirement of formal identification when booking by card or paying cash.

Annual training for Front of House Managers (FOH), with responsibility to cascade to all FOH colleagues.

Front Of House Induction Academy Programme includes specific training on Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking, This programme is compulsory for all new team members to attend within 8 weeks of commencement.

Blended learning programme for colleagues working in areas of the hotel where they may encounter instances involving slavery, human trafficking or sexual exploitation, i.e. Reception and Nights, Housekeeping and Duty/Senior Management.

Policy and updates published direct to all colleagues via the Inspire Learning Portal.

**ESTABLISHED ARRANGEMENTS:**

Established central register of approved agencies. Selection and vetting process included face to face meetings held by the Group's Head of Talent. The purpose of these meetings was to reinforce our policy, ensure full understanding and compliance with their obligations and to reinforce the Group's zero tolerance approach to modern slavery and human trafficking.

Bi annual Talent Acquisition workshop with a focus on industry best practice recruitment standards. Workshop facilitate opportunities to reinforce agency standards including updates on Modern Day Slavery, Human Trafficking and Immigration.

Continued support and involvement with the Stop Slavery Hotel Industry Network to integrate best practice within our own policies and procedures.

Colleague information regarding the prevention of modern slavery and human trafficking is outlined in our Colleague Handbook and Inspire Online, our e-learning portal.

**ESTABLISHED ARRANGEMENTS:**

Standard 'New' Supplier Questionnaire issued for potential suppliers to be eligible to become an approved supplier. Questionnaire incorporates declaration of compliance with the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 along with other risk management based declarations.

There is a robust Modern Day Slavery Clause in all Group Contracts and Trading Agreements. There are also periodic review meetings with all incumbent Suppliers including opportunity for suppliers to advise on any instances of noteworthy activity in relation to Modern Day Slavery, Human Trafficking and other unethical business practices.

In 2018 the Head of Procurement commenced a process of moving away from direct imports. 90% of the current supply chain spend is now with agents, wholesalers, distributors and producers who are based in the UK and Northern Island. It is the Company's aim to increase this to 100% by 2022.



## HOTEL AND VENUES

### ESTABLISHED ARRANGEMENTS

Whistle Blowing Policy available to all online with confidential helpline number.

Code of Conduct online training module is undertaken as part of new colleague's induction which includes awareness on Modern Day Slavery, Human Trafficking, Whistle-blowing, anti-bribery, discrimination and other core HR behavioural conducts. New colleagues will complete this module within the first week of commencement as part of their induction programme. KPI reporting on completion targets is established and reviewed.

Internal audit processes reviewed across all audit disciplines to incorporate formal documented validation of policies and procedures within all departments via HOD and General Manager checklists to robustly 'test' procedures. Reporting parameters are clearly outlined on the Online Risk Management / Incident reporting platform.

All properties to establish a working relationship with their local Police liaison team and attend any local meetings, network events and training opportunities. This is an ongoing activity.

## EMPLOYEES

### ESTABLISHED ARRANGEMENTS:

Agency Supplier Agreement implemented with all incumbent suppliers (validated by the current declaration of compliance with the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015).

The Company does not work with outsourced cleaning companies.

Group wide bespoke posters for colleague noticeboards to raise awareness, promote communication and highlight confidential reporting procedures.

## GOOD AND SERVICES

### ESTABLISHED ARRANGEMENTS:

Ongoing collation of Modern Day Slavery Statements from all incumbent suppliers.



HOTEL AND VENUES	EMPLOYEES	GOOD AND SERVICES
2020 OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED	2020 OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED	2020 OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED
<p>Wellbeing at Heart Policy developed and implemented to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our colleagues, whilst on furlough leave and when some were required to attend work following the lifting of restrictions in July 2020. This included 'Welcome Back to Work' inductions refreshing colleagues on all of the Company's key policies including Modern Day Slavery training.</p>	<p>No employment agencies were used during this year as a result of the pandemic.</p>	<p>New suppliers sourced as a result of requiring new products such as PPE , takeaway food containers , new cleaning equipment underwent the same rigorous new supplier vetting process as is established in the Company.</p>

HOTEL AND VENUES	EMPLOYEES	GOOD AND SERVICES
2021 OBJECTIVES	2021 OBJECTIVES	2021 OBJECTIVES
<p>Review and refresh where appropriate the Group Modern Day Slavery Policy and reissue to all colleagues</p> <p>Source on line Modern Day Slavery training module that can be allocated to a colleagues 'training journey'. This training to be specifically identified on the annual HR compliance calendar and to ensure refresher training takes place on an annual basis for all colleagues.</p>	<p>A review of the Recruitment PSL will be undertaken and all those on the approved list will be written to requiring their re confirmation of their compliance to requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015).</p>	<p>All Company approved suppliers will be written to requiring their re confirmation of their compliance to requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015)</p>



## **MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

We continue to measure the effectiveness of our Policies and Procedures via a number of direct and indirect indicators, namely:

### **TRAINING**

As a result of the Code of Conduct online training, which is a requirement for all new colleagues to undertake as part of their induction (and which was undertaken by all existing colleagues) and additional role specific training undertaken, we are confident that all colleagues have access to training and general guidance commensurate with their respective roles. The online training features a test of a colleague's knowledge throughout the module and at the end of the programme via an examination with a minimum pass percentage of 85%.

### **AUDITING**

Internal Audits conducted by our Central Support team, including Compliance, Human Resources, Procurement and Internal Finance and Operations will require a minimum pass rate of 85% across all discipline specifics.

Operational audits on a monthly cycle with department specific parameters conducted by HOD's and General Managers.

External Audit activity by our Independent Consultants is instigated to sample the effectiveness in an unplanned scenario.

### **REPORTING**

Reporting is by Online incident reporting capturing detailed specific information relating to any given incident, escalation protocols are in place. Multimedia evidence gathering including CCTV data capture. KPI reports generated on demand for Group wide or Hotel/Venue specific trends.

## APPENDIX – COMPANIES OWNED THROUGHOUT 2020

Companies which operate hotels and conference centres:

COMPANY NAME	COMPANY NUMBER
De Vere Cotswold Water Park Limited	3987970
De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms Limited	6809588
De Vere Selsdon Estate Limited	4977813
Onespace Venues Limited	1396936
De Vere 2 Limited	2025334
De Vere Tortworth Court Limited	3745617
De Vere Wokefield Estate Limited	7430305

Property companies:

COMPANY NAME	COMPANY NUMBER
Beaumont House Properties Limited	5971173
Castlewood Property Management Limited	3215195
Castlewood Securities Limited	6082575
Cranage Hall Properties Limited	5940107
De Vere Wokefield Property Limited	6448766
The Grand Hotel Birmingham Limited	10521069
Lagonda Selsdon Propco Limited	4216938
Venice Spareco Limited	5894320
Venice Spareco 2 Limited	5894320

Group central services:

COMPANY NAME	COMPANY NUMBER
Principal Hayley Limited	6137931

## APPENDIX

Non-trading companies:

COMPANY NAME	COMPANY NUMBER
Principal Hotels Topco 1 Limited (Parent)	9357457
Castlewood Utilities Ltd	6082575
De Vere Limited	6139080
De Vere Venues Properties Limited	5622843
DVV Holdco Limited	8813573
DVV Investco Limited	8813674
DVV Properties 2 Limited	9670573
Four Pillars Hotels Limited	1303927
Hadrian Bidco 2 Limited	6220852
HCC Properties Limited	5946999
Lagonda George Holdings Limited	5452202
Martins Bidco Limited	9929546
Principal Hayley Group Limited	4977436
Principal Hotel Company Limited	9358450
Principal Hotels Topco 3 Limited	9359772
Quad Bidco Limited	8821600
Quad Holdco Limited	8821509
Rome Holdco Ltd	8373863
Rome Investco Ltd	8374006
Spire Bidco Hotels Limited	7146956