

Social value policy

Social value describes the delivery of economic, social, and environmental benefits. It looks beyond financial gain to holistically improve the Quality of Life of our Service Users.

Developing social value initiatives builds deeper relationships with the people we work with, putting Service Users right at the heart of service delivery and promoting more resilient, connected communities.

“Social value is at the heart of everything we do at our organisation, It is reflected in the values and behaviours of our colleagues and helps us make a positive contribution to the communities we work in. We are proud to make a difference to our service users’ lives and are focused on creating a diverse workplace where social responsibility is intrinsic in our way of working.

What’s the value of social value?

Social value isn’t just about doing the right thing. It’s about creating real, measurable value through a systematic approach. Under the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, organisations have a legal obligation to consider economic, social, and environmental impact when procuring services.

We know that when we engage with communities and support their economic, social, and environmental development, we build a better understanding of what our Service Users need to live independent, safer, fulfilled lives.

Delivering social value

At this organisation, social value forms a fundamental part of service delivery. For each contract, we create a local Social Value Plan. Our Board sets and monitors social value commitments using the National TOMs Framework. Annual social value reports measure outcomes, making sure we meet our targets.

We are committed to creating a sustainable inclusive society actively managing our operations in ways which optimise our value to the communities in which we work. Social Value is therefore intrinsic to everything we do, for this reason we manage Social Value through a suite of interdependent policies and procedures, which collectively deliver our objectives.

Our Social Value Policy has been designed to ensure that we consider and maximise the social value and beneficial impact that we bring to the communities we work within. This policy covers all our activities as well as the activities of our supply chain including suppliers and service providers. It lays out our management objectives as well as the specific activities that we will undertake to ensure that we meet the aims of this policy.

We measure our impact through feedback and Social Care Related Quality of Life scores, which tell us about Service User wellbeing as well as their individual medical outcomes.

Across our business, our social value activities include:

Community engagement. We proactively connect with local voluntary, community and faith groups who provide key insights about Service User groups. We partner with community outreach programmes and signpost people to befriending services like the Sonali Garden and Age UK to reduce isolation. Our 'pop up' assessment vehicle improves accessibility for rural communities. As a local, independent business itself, we actively support our local shops and economy through our procurement practices, so as to provide greater job security for local people.

Where possible we try to source products and services from local suppliers and encourage and promote a wide and diverse base of local suppliers and businesses.

- Take action to support the physical and mental health of employees and influence suppliers, customers, and communities in this regard.
- We seek to be a good corporate citizen within its local community, and aims not only to meet, but to exceed, its corporate social responsibilities. This includes:
- Donations to a number of charities (Macmillan, Barnardo's and Alzheimer's to name a few).
- Wherever possible, we engage in events relating to local businesses and corporate issues, including those concerning the environment and sustainability.

Supporting charities. We offer each colleague two paid days per year for voluntary work. During COVID-19, colleagues have volunteered at local vaccination centres. We also donated over 40,000 facemasks to local charities. We fundraise for local and national charities, hosting events like Macmillan Coffee mornings at our service centres. We also promote awareness of campaigns via social media.

Recycling. Our Environmental Policy sets out our commitment to reduce, reuse and recycle wherever possible. We donate unwanted equipment.

Environmentally friendly premises. We turn off lights and appliances when not in use, and work with renewable energy providers. Printers only turn on when activated by motion sensors, reducing electricity use and saving between £3,312 and £9,040 annually.

Equality. We do not discriminate against staff on the basis of their gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, or age. The principle of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity applies equally to the treatment of former staff, visitors, clients, customers, and suppliers by members of our current workforce.

We are committed to: Promoting workforce diversity by targeting harder to reach and under-represented groups and communities. Providing accessible, entry-level employment and training opportunities for local people and develop future talent. Upskilling and developing

the competence of our workforce through a structured training and development regime. Promoting fairness, inclusion, and respect principles.

Sustainable, ethical, local supply chain. We only work with suppliers who have strong sustainability policies and procedures. We use local SMEs for cleaning and vehicle maintenance. We source equipment and services from local suppliers. Our online Self-Assessment Tool signposts self-funders to local, accredited retailers for private purchase, supporting local economic development.

Employment and Skills. Our people are important to us. We want everyone to have equal opportunities to grow and improve through training and personal development. We will:

- Establish inclusive labour markets through our recruitment process to ensure roles are designed such that the broadest possible range of individuals can apply and are advertised in ways to ensure they are aware of the opportunities. We capture a broad spectrum of information from those who apply for roles including where they live and how far they progress in the process. This information feeds into our Equality, Diversion and Inclusion Steering group which oversees the development and delivery of all related policies, systems, and procedures.
- Provide our employees with the appropriate education, and training and skills.
- Provide access to good working conditions.
- Maintain our Living Wage accreditation, to prevent individuals, families and communities being held back from reaching an acceptable minimum standard of living.
- Ensure that, to comply with the requirements of Procurement Policy Note (PPN) 14/15, and to meet this obligation, for any public procurement of contracts with a full life value of £10 million and above and duration of 12-months, we will support the skills development and delivery of the apprenticeship commitment. Our apprenticeship programme enables us to assess and develop our employees in a structured and planned way and this demonstrates commitment to supporting, developing, and maintaining skills required.

Staff. We support our people with care and compassion and continually offer them opportunities to learn, develop their skills and advance their careers, with an unwavering commitment to equal pay and creating an inclusive work environment. Our focus on sustainability across our business not only improves our own competitiveness it also helps us attract, motivate, and retain the best people.

Feeling connected, being included, and knowing that each of us belongs. These experiences are grounded in the technology tools we use, our physical locations, our behaviours, and the culture we all create together.

We recognise our people throughout the year for who they are, what makes them unique and the valuable contributions they make through their work.

Our commitment to inclusion and diversity creates an environment that unleashes innovation, allows our people to perform at their best and underpins a culture where everyone has an equal opportunity to belong, advance and thrive.

Whilst many companies believe innovative technology is the answer, we know it's only part of the solution, with the most successful organisations elevating their people and harnessing human potential to create sustainable competitive advantage.

Work-life Balance. Homeworking has evolved our work practices and created new possibilities; not only is it beneficial to our business but also improves our employees' work-life balance. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, homeworking allowed us flexibility to continue our business operations whilst prioritising our responsibility to our staff and customer's health and wellbeing. Post the lift in COVID-19 restrictions, an increasing number of employees have continued to work from home or entered a hybrid model of home and office working. This has benefitted us by providing: Flexibility and agility. Improved employee retention by attracting new talent outside of the traditional company demographic. Increased productivity with improved staff health and wellbeing. Increased work/life balance.

Local employment. We operate a 'local first' recruitment policy. We collaborate with local job centres, schools, and colleges to provide work experience for key groups, e.g., long term unemployed. This provides local jobs, ensures the local community is represented in our workforce, and increases employability.

Fair, representative recruitment. We're a Disability Confident employer and equal opportunities employer. When recruiting new employees, we target under-represented groups to support diversity. For example, we've partnered with Helping Heroes to create a dedicated training academy for ex-service personnel. We support diversity through Equality and Diversity training and respecting cultural and religious holidays.

Colleague wellbeing. We pay all colleagues above the living wage. We invest in colleague wellbeing through our Employee Assistance Programme. We have Mental Health First Aiders across the company, and a company Nurse. On our 'Staff & Me' platform, colleagues can access benefits and company discounts. Continued Professional Development is supported through our Learning and Development Fund, which covers the cost of courses to support career progression.

Reducing carbon emissions through travel reduction. Real-time driver monitoring software from Lightfoot has reduced our harmful emissions by 15%. All our cars meet Euro 6 emissions standards and are regularly serviced and maintained to optimise performance. We're currently piloting electric vehicles and will introduce them to our fleet to improve air quality. Cycle-2-Work and car-pooling schemes further reduce travel. Our advanced routing and scheduling software combine activities, for example completing deliveries and collections in the same area during one journey, improving efficiency and lowering our environmental impact.

Future Carbon Reduction Initiatives. In the future, we hope to implement further measures such as:

- Implement the use of energy-efficient lighting in all areas of head office.
- Executive Board leading by example demonstrating best practice behaviours in carbon reduction starting with the introduction of electric-only vehicles.
- Implement a salary sacrifice scheme for electric vehicle leasing.

- Continuing to work with our landlord to switch electricity supply to renewable energy.
- Continued investment in technology enabling us to interact remotely by means of reducing business travel.
- Look into using a hotel booking platform enabling businesses to reduce and remove their carbon footprint from hotel bookings.

All the above areas are covered by a range of separate interlinked policies including Environment, Sustainability, and Procurement

'Digital first' approach. Use of online tools like Microsoft Teams have reduced business mileage by 30%. Through this one measure alone, we expect to reduce carbon emissions by 580 tonnes CO₂e.

Conclusion. To realise our Social Value objectives, we recognise the need for and are committed to communicating these objectives to our suppliers, potential and existing employees, customers, and wider stakeholders.

This is achieved via our procurement and recruitment processes and our existing communication channels including the business plan, intranet, employee consultative committee, newsletters, team briefings, staff induction processes and stakeholder engagement.

This policy and the actions arising from it will be annually reviewed as part of the business planning process which involves the senior leadership and management teams with final approval via the Our Board.

Last Reviewed: 28 March 2023

Next Review: 28 March 2024