



Building Connected Communities

Our Social Value strategy





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Introduction

Our People-Planet-Purpose sustainability framework commits us to achieving a bold legacy of delivering £1bn core social value by 2030. This ambition spans all parts of our business - VolkerFitzpatrick, VolkerStevin, VolkerRail, VolkerHighways, VolkerLaser and PJ Davidson - and reflects the impact we're having by investing in future talent, partnering with schools, supporting social mobility for underrepresented groups, directing spend to Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME's) and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSE's) and building strong community connections.

'Building Connected Communities' – our social value strategy - defines how we are making this a reality.

It brings together the wider team including procurement, work winning, HR, and occupational health, as well as sustainability, Fairness, Inclusion and Respect (FIR) and most importantly, our operational delivery experts, to ensure we deliver social value holistically across our whole business.

Richard Offord
Chief Executive Officer



Delivering meaningful social value

The strategy supports the great work already being done in the business to ensure fair working practices, being an inclusive employer, investing in the training and development of our employees, making conscious procurement decisions and managing the environment responsibly – all of which are underpinned by dedicated teams, robust policies, clear procedures and aligned strategies.

Our projects and teams work with clients, stakeholders and local communities to set key performance indicators and create bespoke social value delivery plans that will benefit from our companywide collective ambition, shared resources and mutual partnerships.

Building Connected Communities delivers meaningful impact by focusing on three aspects of social value that promote positive social mobility: helping to give everyone a fair chance to succeed, regardless of their background or social circumstance.

Education Engagement

– inspiring futures by connecting classrooms to careers

Employability

– fair and supportive access to employment opportunities

Investing in Communities

– turning local support into lasting change





Enablers of change

Transparency

Transparency builds trust – something that is integral to the delivery of our strategy. We use the Thrive social value platform and Impact Evaluation Standard (IES) as trusted and consistent ways to capture and report social value across the business. We also have governance regimes to make sure we are reporting our activities in line with IES requirements. Reporting is subject to internal assurance and, in the future, external validation.

Focusing on local needs

Conducting robust local needs analysis prior to commencing social value activities ensures initiatives are relevant and responsive to the communities we are there to support. Understanding and aligning with local priorities means we can target interventions that drive lasting impact and contribute to more resilient communities.

Partnerships and collaboration

We are greater than the sum of our parts – maximising social value together is our aim. Working collaboratively, both internally with functional teams and externally with our supply chain and specialist partners, provides strength in numbers, as well as enabling us to pool ideas, resources and best practice, and co-create solutions that build on individual strengths.



Education Engagement

Inspiring futures by connecting classrooms to careers

Our 'Classroom to Careers' programme joins the dots between the work being done in the classroom and how this translates into career choices for the future – all supported with a focus on skills that build confidence and employability to broaden horizons and raise aspirations for young people.

Making it happen

- We will continue to use the Careers and Enterprise Company Employers Standards and ensure the highest levels of safeguarding best practice.
- We build meaningful relationships with schools, colleges, universities and other education provisions, which means we can work in a variety of ways to meet student needs.
- Interactions with students include work experience, work placements, T-Level placements, careers talks and advice, skills workshops, CV writing, interview practice and student mentoring, as well as events, lessons and Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) workshops.
- We have a growing team of people around the business who support education engagement activities. These are a mix of our early career cohort as well as more experienced and technical experts in the business, all of who are passionate about making a difference.



Employability

Fair and supportive access to employment opportunities

We create fair and supportive pathways into employment by removing barriers and widening access for individuals from all backgrounds to support social mobility. Through targeted outreach, inclusive recruitment practices, and carefully chosen partnerships, we equip people with the skills, confidence, and support they need to thrive in our business. This approach not only strengthens our talent pipeline but also drives long-term social impact and inclusive growth.

Making it happen

- We support the attraction and retention of individuals from underrepresented groups including, but not limited to, those who are disabled, prison leavers, veterans, care leavers and long-term unemployed.
- Fair working practices, including inclusive recruitment, fair pay, agile working opportunities and access to training and development are all embedded in our business.
- We offer 'earn-and-learn' opportunities through a wide variety of routes into employment including post-16 education and skills programmes, multi-level apprenticeships, work placements and on the job development, as well as supportive routes such as employability programmes, and tailored employment for individuals with additional needs.
- We collaborate with our supply chain to identify pathways to employment.



Investing in Communities

Turning local support into lasting impact

Our strength lies in finding local community projects, Community Interest Companies, social enterprises and organisations that benefit from our support. This may be through fundraising, a financial donation, gifts in kind, people power, or a more long-term investment, but whatever level of support provided, we always want to leave a positive legacy. We also invest in long-term corporate partnerships that are aligned to our company visions and values.

Making it happen

- Our employees are entitled to volunteering leave which can either be facilitated through opportunities promoted on our volunteering portal, or through existing relationships. These opportunities will always prioritise the needs of our community partners and help to support contract delivery requirements.
- Strategic partnerships are in place with charities both at group and business unit level. These provide an opportunity for longer term investment, both financially and in other ways such as volunteering, mentoring and specialist advice, and are in addition to the relationships that projects form with local charities and community partners.
- All types of businesses have a fair opportunity to work with us through a procurement strategy that has sustainability embedded into it. This includes working with SME's, VCSE'S and organisations with diverse leadership teams to help build strong, resilient supply chains.
- We recognise the positive impact that local spending has on communities, businesses and regional economies, recording this alongside our core social value.



For further information, or to provide any feedback
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