

Social value at National Highways

Beth Bradley
Social Value Team

Why we focus on social value

We define social value as the benefits that National Highways and its supply chain deliver for people, the environment and the economy.

Our work needs to include transforming lives positively through social value and the legacy benefits it generates as a result.



Our 29 social value reporting metrics were produced in alignment with the themes and outcomes outlined in PPN 06/20.

Our social value plan

Our social value plan launched in October 2022. It showcases our ambitions, our focus areas, the way we already deliver social value and describes how we can do even more.

1. **Engage with our people**, so we can make sure social value is part of our day-to-day work
2. **Review our processes and governance**, so we can make sure social value is considered in our decision making
3. **Make changes to our reporting**, so we can measure our social value impact alongside existing metrics
4. **Work with our suppliers** so they can maximise the impact of their social value

Our social value plan is available [on our website](#).



Executive summary

We define social value as 'the benefits that we and our supply chain deliver for people, the environment and the economy'.

Social value isn't new to us – we've always built value into every aspect of our network, whether that's delivering 100 cycling schemes during the first road period, or our plans to deliver even more, by investing £100m through our designated funds programme in the second road period.

From economic prosperity to preserving natural habitats, we know how important it is that we make a positive difference to the communities and environment where we work.

Although we've been contributing to social value for a while, we haven't measured what we contribute before, or set ourselves ambitions for future growth.

It's why we now have a social value plan, together with a framework that showcases our ambitions, how we already deliver social value, and how we can do even more.

Economic prosperity
Investing in new skills, jobs, supply chains and delivering improvements in every region across England.

Improving the environment
Making sustainable decisions that conserve natural resources and enhance ecosystems.

Community wellbeing
Addressing health-related issues and improving connectivity, amenities, education and heritage programmes for communities.

Equality, diversity and inclusion
Supporting the creation of a more equal society by increasing opportunities for under-represented groups and providing a road network that is accessible for all.

Our work will focus on:

- Directly contributing to economic growth including suppliers, local spend, new businesses, small-to-medium-size enterprises, micro, voluntary, charitable and social enterprises/individuals
- Improving productivity by improving the strategic road network
- Contributing to apprenticeships, skills and education, and regional economic prosperity

Our pillar ambitions and enabling action areas will be set out in our 2022-2024 plan, building on the good work already done.

2022

- Approved social value definition and framework in place
- Launch social value plan internally and externally to ensure consistency
- Implement a base set of supply chain metrics
- Capture supplier contributions in social value reporting tool
- Establish social value governance steering group, cross-department working group and supply chain focus group
- Review and update our project and operational processes
- Trail a Social Value Fund supporting small community benefit projects

2023

- Embed social value into our end-to-end procurement processes
- Create opportunities for voluntary organisations, charities and social enterprises via an established framework
- Produce annual social value progress report
- Fully incorporate social value into A303 and LTC
- Make social value more prominent in our recruitment and retention approach
- Encourage more suppliers to join our supplier group and actively contribute
- Embed the importance of delivering social value across all our suppliers
- Improve the skills of our people and suppliers

2024

- Embed social value into our end-to-end procurement processes
- Continuously assess our performance and hold ourselves and our suppliers to account
- Embed social value in our culture as an organisation and within our supply base
- Improve our supplier diversity and diversity of thought

Our action areas relating to the environment and net zero are of critical importance to National Highways. They can be found in our Environmental Sustainability Strategy, which will be published in 2023, and their own specific documents called Net Zero Highways: our 2027-2040/2050 Plan.

Supporting social job creation and entrepreneurship

The new A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon scheme was specifically designed to support the growth of the economy. However, we also asked our lead contractor to create local companies to work on the scheme.

K3 Recovery, based in Kettering, was appointed to provide free recovery for construction and industry along the route. Thanks to this contract, the company was able to increase its fleet from 10 to 60 vehicles, creating more jobs for local people.

When this opportunity arises, we don't think we'd be successful because of the size of the contract and the jobs we were at the time. But we went for it, gave it our best shot and here we are! National Highways and the A14 team helped us get our brand out there and that's probably the main thing for us.

David Brown, Company Director, K3 Recovery



Our social value framework

The four pillars of our social value framework contribute value. Collectively, they align with the government's themes and feed into key policy drivers such as the Levelling Up agenda and Net Zero.

Economic prosperity




Directly contributing to economic growth including suppliers, local spend, new businesses, small-to medium-size enterprises, micro, voluntary, charitable and social enterprises/mutuals

Improving productivity by improving the strategic road network

Contributing to apprenticeships, skills and education, and regional economic prosperity

Improving the environment



(See our [Net Zero Highways plan](#) and [Environmental Sustainability Strategy](#), due for publication in 2023)

Working toward net carbon zero emissions from corporate activity, road users and construction

Enhancing the natural environment through improving ecosystems and biodiversity; and protecting our natural resources

Respecting neighbouring communities by reducing our impact on air quality, noise and water quality; supporting a healthier society

This pillar is managed by the Environmental and Sustainability team.

Community wellbeing



Healthier and safer communities

Promoting safe, active travel and non-motorised users improving health from issues related to the strategic road network


Improving community amenities

Improving connections within and between communities

Contributing to the process of creating quality places that people want to live, work, play, and learn in

Supporting community education and heritage programmes

Equality, diversity and inclusion



Contributing to employment and opportunities for women, ethnic minorities, the long-term unemployed, veterans, people with disabilities, the LGBTQ+ community, care givers, school leavers, young people not engaged in education, employment or training, ex-offenders, the homeless, maternity returners, new to industry and flexible workers

Contributing opportunities to create a more equal society

Creating a more inclusive and accessible strategic road network

What we will focus on in the second road period

We agreed the following action plan for 2022-2024, building on the good work already undertaken throughout 2021. Our progress is reported regularly to our executive sponsor, Malcolm Dare.

2022

- Approved social value definition and framework in place
- Launch social value plan internally and externally to ensure consistency
- Implement a base set of supply chain metrics
- Capture supplier contributions in social value reporting tool
- Establish social value governance: steering group, cross-department working group and supply chain focus group
- Review and update our project and operational processes
- Trial a social value fund supporting small community benefit projects

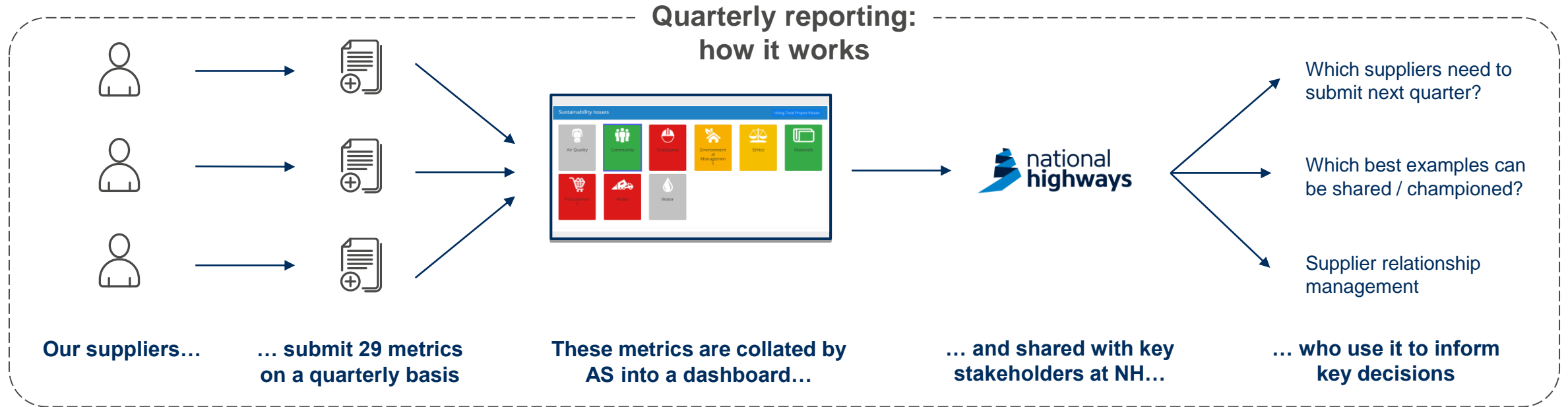
2023

- Establish a baseline for social value performance
- Review supply chain base metrics
- Implement corporate level reporting system
- Include social value metrics in our Organisation Performance Report
- Embed social value into our end-to-end procurement processes
- Create opportunities for voluntary organisations, charities and social enterprises via an established framework
- Produce annual social value progress report
- Fully incorporate social value into A303 and LTC
- Make social value more prominent in our recruitment and retention approach
- Encourage more suppliers to join our supplier group and actively contribute
- Embed the importance of delivering social value across all our suppliers
- Improve the skills of our people and suppliers

2024

- Lead social value in the public sector transport sector in RIS3
- Fully incorporate social value into all major procurements and decision making
- Demonstrate continually improving performance trends
- Ensure social value informs Road Period 3 decision-making
- Continually assess our performance and hold ourselves and our suppliers to account
- Embed social value in our culture as an organisation and within our supply base
- Increase our supplier diversity and diversity of thought

The National Highways Social Value Tool

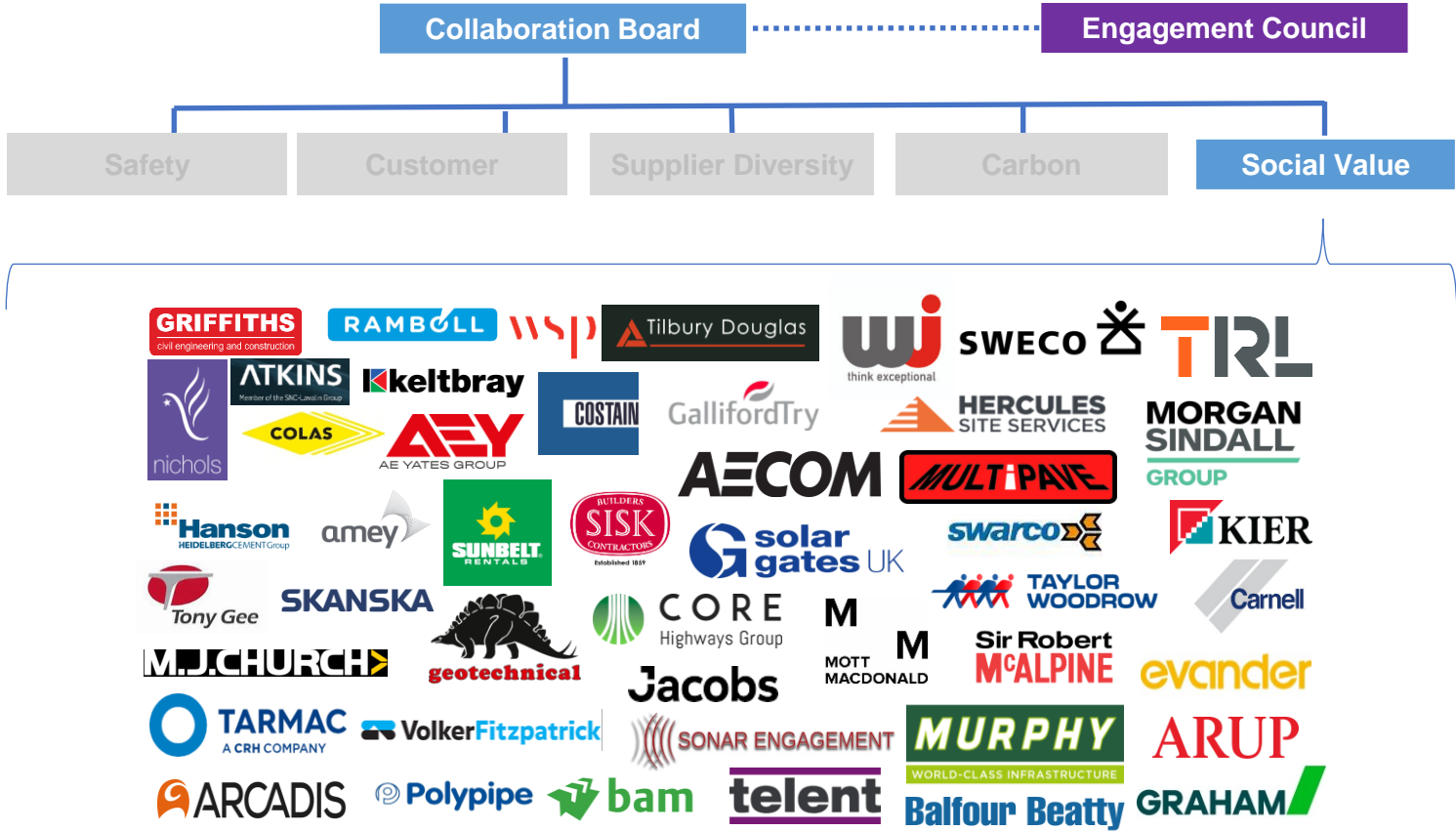


Our standard supply chain social value metrics

NH social value framework pillar	#	Base Metric	Associated PPN O6/20 Themes
Economic Prosperity 	1	Number of full-time equivalent employment opportunities, within your direct employees, supported under the contract	Tackling economic inequality
	2	Number of National Skills Academy for Construction roles (excluding apprenticeships)	Tackling economic inequality
	3	Number of weeks of apprenticeships (excluding National Skills Academy for Construction roles)	Tackling economic inequality
	4	Number of apprenticeships completed (excluding National Skills Academy for Construction roles)	Tackling economic inequality
	5	Number of hours dedicated to educational/career engagement events (excluding work placements)	Tackling economic inequality
	6	Number of weeks of work placements	Tackling economic inequality
	7	Number of hours of accredited training delivered	Tackling economic inequality
	8	Number of registered qualifications gained	Tackling economic inequality
	9	£ value of contract opportunities awarded under the contract (start-ups and micro)	Tackling economic inequality
	10	£ value of contract opportunities awarded under the contract (Small and Medium Enterprises)	Tackling economic inequality
	11	£ value of contract opportunities awarded under the contract (Voluntary organisations, Charities, Social Enterprises and mutuals)	Tackling economic inequality
	12	Number of local employees (full-time equivalent) on contract	Tackling economic inequality
	13	Number of long-term unemployed (>12 months) (full-time equivalent), excluding Not in Employment Education or Training (NEETs), working on a scheme	Tackling economic inequality
	14	Number of employees not in Employment Education or Training (full-time equivalent) working on a scheme	Tackling economic inequality
	15	Number of people 'other new to the industry' (full-time equivalent) working on a scheme	Tackling economic inequality
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 	16	Number of hours Equality Diversity Inclusion / Fairness Inclusion Respect training delivered	Equal opportunity
	17	Number of women (full-time equivalent) working on a scheme	Equal opportunity
	18	Number of ethnic minority employees (full-time equivalent), of those employees who self-declared this, working on a scheme	Equal opportunity
	19	Number of LGBTQ+ employees (full-time equivalent), of those employees who self-declared this, working on a scheme	Equal opportunity
	20	Number of armed forces veterans (full-time equivalent) working on a scheme	Equal opportunity
	21	Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) level	Equal opportunity
	22	Number of disabled employees (full-time equivalent), of those employees who self-declared this, working on a scheme	Equal opportunity
	23	Number of people who have been cared for children (care leavers) (full-time equivalent) working on a scheme	Equal opportunity
	24	Number of rehabilitating or ex-offenders (full-time equivalent) working on a scheme	Equal opportunity
	25	Number of people classified as homeless (full-time equivalent) working on a scheme	Equal opportunity
Community Wellbeing 	26	Number of maternity leave/returners (full-time equivalent) working on a scheme	Wellbeing
	27	Number of employees who have the options to work flexibly included in their contract terms	Wellbeing
	28	Number of companies in your supply chain with measures in place to improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of employees	Wellbeing
	29	Number of hours delivered to volunteering and community project initiatives	Wellbeing

Collaborating with our supply chain

The collaboration between our Social Value Supplier Group and Social Value Team is critical to helping us maximise the delivery of social value. A series of jointly-led action groups are driving progress.



WSP & National Highways transform Oakleaf “Safe Haven” Community Drop In Centre

With over 1800 patrons and clients attending the Guildford Safe Haven in 2022, it is clear that the service fulfils a pivotal local community support function for those in mental health crisis, depression, or who are simply lonely. The facility needed a refurbishment to add vibrancy and give it a new lease of life.

The team took the Safe Haven back to basics, with deep cleaning, new furniture, removing partitions, old shelving, painting, new lighting and external planting. To allow the facility to operate every day for its clients, the team delivered the work over 3 days in 2 shifts.

The generous volunteering and financial support provided by WSP and National Highways strengthened their existing collaboration and spread awareness of Oakleaf’s community support systems with more of their employees. Over the three days, 27 employees donated a total of 81 volunteering hours.

The team’s work has ensured the Safe Haven is brighter, cleaner, more space efficient with new calming mood lighting, and provides a more positive experience for patrons and clients.



"By joining forces it shows just how important social value is becoming to major organisations and shows we can have a much bigger impact the more we work together!"

**- Mitchell MacKenzie,
Projects Control
Apprentice**

