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## **Social Value Policy**

**COR-POL-36**

**Version 1**

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**Date approved: 8<sup>th</sup> September 2026**

**Approved by: Customer Voice Committee**

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## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 Social value is central to our Community Investment and Neighbourhood Strategies and supports our vision of 'creating thriving communities'. This Policy sets out how we will achieve social value and maximise positive outcomes for customers, communities, and stakeholders.

## **2. What we mean by 'social value.'**

- 2.1 'Social value' is the additional economic, social, and environmental benefit created through our activities, investment, and procurement, beyond the direct delivery of services to our customers and communities. Put simply, social value is the extra good that an organisation creates for people, communities, and the environment through the way it works and spends its money.
- 2.2 Examples of social value include.
- A contractor working for a housing association provides apprenticeships or work experience for local residents, helping people gain skills and find employment.
  - Employees volunteering their time to help improve a community garden, run a community event, or support local groups and charities.
  - A supplier planting trees, creates wildlife habitats, reduces waste, or helps residents reduce their energy bills and carbon emissions.
- 2.3 Social value delivers long-term, measurable improvements for people, communities, and the environment by creating opportunities, supporting local prosperity, improving wellbeing, and contributing to sustainable places. Social value is embedded throughout Southway's decision-making and contract delivery to maximise positive outcomes for customers, communities, and stakeholders.
- ## **3. Scope**
- 3.1 This Policy applies to relevant procurement, project delivery, contract management, and supplier engagement activity where we can achieve additional social value. Colleagues, suppliers, and delivery partners involved in designing, procuring, awarding, managing, or monitoring this activity are subject to this policy.

## 4. Our Policy Commitments

- 4.1 We will work with tenants, residents, and other community stakeholders, using their knowledge and expertise to identify local priorities for social value investment, ensuring our resources and partnerships deliver meaningful community benefits and leave a lasting positive legacy.
- 4.2 Commitments will be aligned to organisational and local priorities and designed to deliver measurable benefits for customers, communities, and the environment.
- 4.3 We will include proportionate, outcome-focused social value commitments within relevant procurement and contract and hold contractors to account for delivering them.
- 4.4 We will work with suppliers and delivery partners to secure, monitor, and evidence social value outcomes, ensuring commitments are credible, achievable and deliver value for money.

## 5. Customer Voice

- 5.1 Customer voice will be at the heart of our social value approach. We will work with tenants and residents to identify local priorities, shape social value commitments, and influence how benefits are delivered.
- 5.2 By listening to diverse voices and responding to local needs, we will ensure social value investment creates meaningful opportunities, strengthens communities, and delivers outcomes that matter most to our customers.
- 5.3 We will be transparent about the impact achieved and demonstrate how customer feedback has influenced decisions and delivery.

## 6. Social Value Priorities

- 6.1 Social value delivered through this policy will be aligned primarily to the key themes in Southway's Five-Year Plan and Community Investment Strategy 2023–27, ensuring activity supports wider organisational objectives and reflects the priorities identified through consultation with customers.
- 6.2 Our themes include:
  - **Customers** – supporting the ambition that at least 80% of customers are satisfied with Southway as a landlord.

- **Neighbourhoods and Communities** – using social value to strengthen communities, including creating jobs, enhancing local opportunities, and improving biodiversity and green spaces.
- **Sustainability** – working to reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainability and biodiversity, including adopting waste reduction, and recycling practices, supporting customers with energy efficiency, cost management, and advice.
- **Value for Money** – embedding a value for money approach across all contracts, ensuring social investment delivers maximum benefit for customers and communities and aligns with corporate objectives.

## **7. Social Value and our REACH Values**

- 7.1 Southway's REACH values of Respect, Equity, Ambition, Compassion and Honesty will guide how social value is designed, delivered, and reported. We will listen to communities, promote fair and inclusive access to opportunities, seek ambitious and lasting outcomes, consider the needs of people facing disadvantage, and report transparently on our commitments and performance.

## **8. Delivery and management**

- 8.1 Social value requirements will be considered at the earliest appropriate stage of each relevant project or procurement and will be proportionate to its nature, scale, and value.
- 8.2 Suppliers will be expected to contribute to social value outcomes where this is relevant and proportionate to the contract or project being delivered. Requirements and measures will be clearly defined in procurement and contract documentation. Agreed commitments will form part of routine contract management and performance reporting, with evidence required to prove delivery and impact.
- 8.3 The relevant manager for the contract or project will monitor performance, identify delivery risks, and address underperformance or non-compliance. Commitments must be credible, achievable, and designed to deliver value for money without creating avoidable costs.

## 9. Measurement and Reporting

- 9.1 Southway will set clear measures for relevant social value commitments and collect and maintain evidence of delivery. Reporting will distinguish between:
- inputs, such as funding, staff time, or supplier contributions.
  - outputs, such as jobs, training places, volunteering hours or environmental improvements; and
  - outcomes, including the resulting benefit or change for customers, communities, and the environment.
- 9.2 Performance and impacts will be reported quarterly to Southway's Executive team as value for money outcomes and annually to the Customer Voice Committee through the Community Investment report. Customer feedback and case studies will be used alongside quantitative measures to help assess the quality and longer-term value.

## 10. Regulation and legislation requirements

- 10.1 This policy supports compliance with relevant procurement legislation, regulatory expectations, and Southway's internal governance arrangements. This includes meeting the requirements and expectations outlined in the Procurement Act 2023 and the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

## 11. Who is responsible?

| Role                                        | Responsibility                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Executive Director of Homes and Communities | Strategic delivery of this Policy.                              |
| Head of Communities                         | Operational responsibility for implementation.                  |
| Senior Procurement Officer                  | Support proportionate requirements and evaluation arrangements. |
| Suppliers and delivery partners:            | Deliver agreed commitments and provide appropriate evidence.    |
| Customer Voice Committee                    | Receive assurance on delivery and impacts.                      |

## 12. Review of Policy

- 12.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if required to reflect legislative changes, organisational priorities and lessons learned from delivery.

## 13. Glossary

| Term                    | What it means                                                                    |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Apprenticeship</b>   | A paid job where someone learns skills while they work.                          |
| <b>Biodiversity</b>     | Having many types of plants, animals, and wildlife in a place.                   |
| <b>Carbon emissions</b> | Gases that go into the air and can harm the planet.                              |
| <b>Community</b>        | People who live, work, or spend time in the same place.                          |
| <b>Contract</b>         | A formal agreement that says what work will be done.                             |
| <b>Customer voice</b>   | What tenants and residents tell us about what matters to them.                   |
| <b>Delivery partner</b> | A person or group we work with to get something done.                            |
| <b>Evidence</b>         | Information that shows something has happened.                                   |
| <b>Impact</b>           | The difference our work makes.                                                   |
| <b>Input</b>            | What is put in, like money, time, staff help or materials.                       |
| <b>Outcome</b>          | The change or benefit that happens because of the work.                          |
| <b>Output</b>           | Something we can count, like jobs, training places, or hours.                    |
| <b>Procurement</b>      | How we choose and buy goods, works or services.                                  |
| <b>Stakeholder</b>      | A person or group who is affected by our work or has an interest in it.          |
| <b>Supplier</b>         | A business or group that provides goods, works or services to us.                |
| <b>Sustainability</b>   | Doing things in a way that helps people and the planet now and in the future.    |
| <b>Value for money</b>  | Using money well to get the best results. Our strategy is <a href="#">here</a> . |

|                     |                                                |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Volunteering</b> | Giving time to help others without being paid. |
| <b>Wellbeing</b>    | How well and safe people feel in their life.   |

## **POLICY REVIEW HISTORY**

*To be completed during each review*

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### **Previous versions**

V1.1 – Customer Voice Committee – September 2026

**Date of last EIA:** August 2026

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**Review lead by:** Assistant Director of Customers and Communities

### **Main points or amendments made and reasons.**

New policy September 2026.

**Next review due:** Q3 2029/30

**Approval level:** Customer Voice Committee