

Social Value Strategy

What is social value?

Social value refers to the wider benefits we bring to stakeholders, beyond purely financial aspects. It is the impact we have on employees, their families, clients and communities. It covers **internal** business practice in a socially conscious way, such as job creation, upskilling, wellbeing, inclusivity and supporting local businesses. It also includes activities **additional** to normal business practices, such as charitable programmes, educational events and volunteering.

Why develop social value?

Improving social value yields tangible benefits. It drives essential upskilling of employees, improves public image, gives a competitive advantage when bidding, supports employee retention, and supports local communities and economy, which in turn delivers business stability. Our vision supports the Social Value Act 2012, and the Procurement Act 2023.

Vision

As the UK's leading local authority trading company (LATCo), we aim to improve lives while generating sustainable, ethical profit for the public sector. We focus on doing business the right way - creating value through positive impact on people, places, and the planet.

At Norse Group, values-based service delivery underpins everything we do, with social value embedded across our services. Through our joint ventures, we will work to strengthen local economies by creating jobs and working with small and medium-sized businesses to keep investment local. Profit is reinvested into public services, supporting communities where it is needed most. Through collaboration we have developed support for people facing disadvantage or barriers to work, from veterans to ex-offenders. When establishing new joint ventures, we assess local needs and work with community foundations to develop employment support programmes tailored to each area.

Norse will follow its **three pillars of community engagement** to implement lasting positive action:

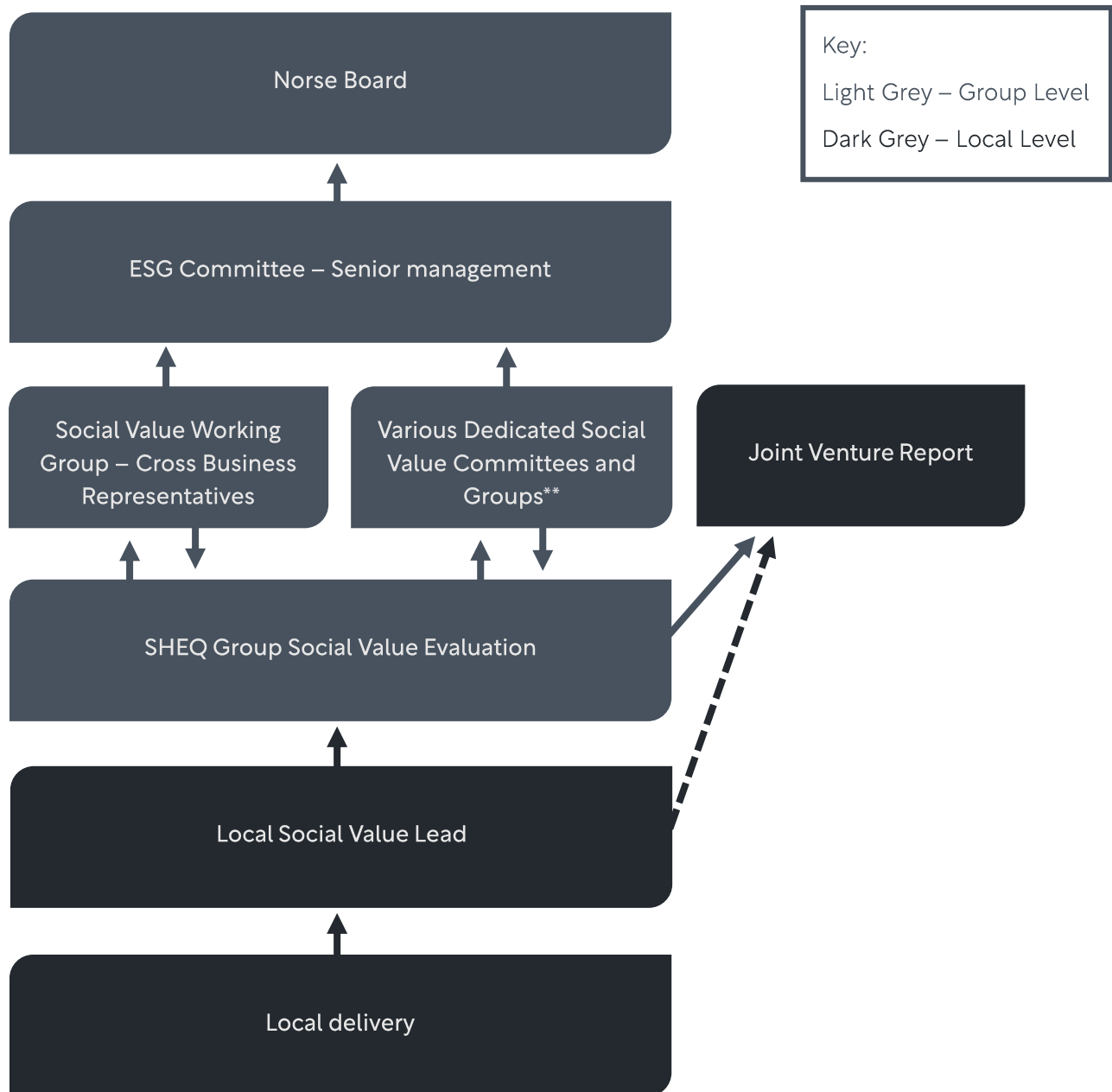
1. Understand local priorities and context, to ensure delivery **meets local needs**.
2. Form **strategic partnerships** with key user-led organisations, enabling development of programmes with those who already deliver to local communities.
3. Leverage **Norse's professional expertise** to amplify social impact.

Monitoring and reporting

Capturing social value impact is complex. We aim to gather data quantitatively and qualitatively, to best demonstrate the true impact, as often numbers alone do not represent impact. As per Social Value International's guidance, we aim to gather "enough precision for the decision". This sets the ideal level of data gathering as the level of detail required for decision making to improve future social value.

Accountability, monitoring and reporting processes make sure that social value impact is accounted for and commitments delivered against. It also maximises our positive impact, gives confidence when showcasing impact to clients, as well as to fully celebrates the hard work of employees and Norse.

Delivery and governance structure



**Other related committees and groups:

- Our Voice Forum
- Work Matters Employers Board – with Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital
- Norfolk Highways Social Value Committee – with Norfolk County Council and Kier
- NCS Strategy Project Team
- Senior HR & L&D managers meeting
- Others as appropriate

Process for development

To be used when developing new social value commitments (e.g. in setting up new joint ventures) and when developing pre-existing areas of Norse (such as a department or established company).

Set up

- 1 Define new or preexisting area – e.g. New joint venture, developing an existing department.
- 2 Local Social Value Lead identified.
- 3 Undergo local research to develop understanding of opportunities. Desk based research can help. Highly recommended to discuss with local community foundation.
- 4 Form partnership with relevant pre-existing service delivery, such as Voluntary, Community or Social Enterprise (VCSE) group, school and shape proposals with their expertise.
- 5 Confirm targets Partnership Director, Senior Director, customers as applicable, local representatives, and group's specialist advisors.
- 6 Establish KPI/commitments document, and after approval by above groups, send to SHEQ for central holding and monitoring.
- 7 Determine local Social Value lead, and frequency of reporting.

Monitoring and continuous improvement

- 1 Local Social Value Lead to send updates to SHEQ on a quarterly or annual basis through the social value reporting platform. The lead must be trained by the SHEQ social value advisor to ensure accurate reporting (e.g. fundraising not logged as a Norse donation)
- 2 Quarterly reports will be made available to councils.
- 3 Reporting will be fed up the monitoring pathway, to Social Value Working Group, ESG committee, and Norse Group Board. Successes celebrated through the comms team.
- 4 Annual local level meetings will be held to identify progress against commitments.
- 5 Annual group-level social value report will be made publicly available to celebrate achievements.
- 6 Improvements will be made along the plan-do-check-act cycle.

Requirements for each of Norse's areas

- ☐ Have read the social value strategy, with reflection on “vision” and “process for development”
- ☐ Have at least one local VCSE partner or contact, allowing co-development of actions
- ☐ Have developed a local needs-based social value commitment/KPI document, held centrally
- ☐ Have a named Local Social Value Lead, who has been trained by SHEQ advisor
- ☐ Report on Social Value initiatives quarterly and/or annually to SHEQ

Example commitments

The following actions are underway within areas of Norse. They are listed to inspire future initiatives and illustrate the range of social value commitments possible, not set company-wide commitments.

Hiring

- Run XX support into work schemes
 - Work Matters (SEND students) 3-month placement
 - Ex-offender employment programme with local HMP or charity
 - Veteran employment programme
- XX% of jobs listed on local council employment board
- Gain/maintain disability confident employer status

Skills and education

- XX educational events in local schools
- XX work placements supported
- XX internal apprenticeship in progress p.a. to upskill Norse employee
- XX external apprenticeship funded p.a. for a community member, council or VCSE discretion. Targeted to support locally disadvantaged groups into career progression
- XX% employees completing onboarding training including EDI, and sustainability

Local economy

- Add XX SME's onto Norse Procurement Matrix, tagged as local providers
- XX% of spend in local companies
- XX% of suppliers undergo environmental assessment

Environmental

- Undergo local carbon footprint analysis
- Create local decarbonisation plan
- Reduce carbon by XX% annually.
- Support clients' net zero targets

- Improve biodiversity and resource use

Wellbeing

- XX mental health first aiders trained
- Create a designated wellbeing space
- Employee consultation receives XX% return rate, with at least XX ideas implemented
- Maintain XX retention levels
- Celebrate employees through reward schemes
 - Long service
 - Local contribution
 - Eco-driving

Community engagement

- Release £XX from the Norse Community Fund to a local VCSE group
- XX kg of material (e.g. waste wood) donated to interested VCSE
- XX volunteer hours utilized
- XX donated
 - £ spend
 - Hours volunteering
 - Resources e.g. material or van use
 - Skills shared

Large-impact charitable collaboration

- Collaboration with Local Community Foundation and/or local VCSE to develop long-running projects to match local needs and Norse resources. Examples of where this has worked in Norse include...
 - Nourishing Norfolk – offering warehouse, training and food delivery to food hubs
 - FarmWise – hands-on events for children linking farming to food production