

ESG and Social Value Policy: Community, Economy and the Environment

Incorporating Carbon Reduction Plan

10/01/2025

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Version 1 | Date: January 2025 Next Review Date: January 2026 |
| Title: | ESG and Social Value Policy: Community, Economy and the Environment, incorporating Carbon Reduction Plan |
| Author: | Policy Assistant |
| Applicability: | All organisation |

This policy will be reviewed once a year at minimum.

ESG and Social Value Policy: Community, Economy and the Environment (incorporating Carbon Reduction Plan)

Introduction

Consortium24 recognises its responsibility to contribute positively to society and communities beyond its commercial activities. This policy outlines our commitment to ensuring ethical governance and creating social value; making a meaningful impact in our communities, economies and the environment through improving community well-being, promoting inclusion, reducing inequality, reducing negative environmental impact and addressing local needs.

Policy Statement

Our team is committed to supporting and encouraging ethical governance and social value within the business and beyond, to benefit as far as possible the communities and economies in which we work. We ensure that we give stakeholders 'additionality' in value and impact. At Consortium24 we are committed to conducting our business in a way that is environmentally responsible, socially inclusive, and governed by strong ethical standards. This Policy outlines our guiding principles and commitments to sustainability, social value and responsible business practices.

Environmental Commitment (E)

Although our environmental footprint as a consulting firm is modest, we strive to minimize it and our practices are described below.

Social Responsibility and Social Value (S)

We are committed to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace that values and enables people and communities. We operate to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy maintaining a diverse and inclusive work environment, free of discrimination and harassment and our social value activities are described below.

Governance (G)

We are dedicated to upholding the highest standards of ethics, integrity, and transparency. Our governance principles include:

- Operating with honesty and integrity in all business dealings.
- Maintaining confidentiality and data security for our clients.
- Avoiding conflicts of interest and disclosing any potential concerns.
- Complying with all relevant laws, regulations, and professional standards.
- Regularly reviewing this policy and making improvements as needed.

Responsibilities

Consortium24 Ltd is a small enterprise that undertakes to provide consultancy support to clients in the health and care sector. Our key activities include:

- Desktop analyses of data, processes, policies and procedures.
- Engagement with stakeholders through various platforms and using various tools (interviews, surveys, focus groups etc.)
- Provision of workshops and meetings.
- Developments of presentations and reports.
- Attendance at meetings, site visits etc.

We are committed to:

- Identifying opportunities to create value and make a positive impact on society, including the communities, individuals, and stakeholders we interact with.
- Engaging in activities that support social inclusion, diversity, equality, and community well-being.
- Collaborating with community partners, charitable organisations, and stakeholders to address social issues and contribute to sustainable solutions.
- Taking a business approach to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to as support local, national and global ambitions for achieving carbon net zero, nature based solutions and bio diversity gains.
-

Management:

The management team is responsible for leading by example, promoting a culture of social, governance and environmental responsibility, and allocating resources to support ESG and social value initiatives.

Employees:

All employees are encouraged to actively participate in ESG and social value initiatives, and we identify opportunities for community engagement, and support activities aligned with ESG objectives.

Sub-Contractors/Associates:

All Sub-Contractors and Associates working with Consortium24 Ltd have responsibility to ensure compliance to all operating standards and legal requirements through:

- A) Awareness and knowledge of all policies relevant to Consortium24 Ltd.
- B) Implementation of and adherence to our business practices and procedures as outlined in sub contractor/associate contractual agreements.

Our ESG Principles

Community Engagement: We engage with local communities by volunteering time, skills, and resources to support community services, projects, events, or initiatives that promote health, social well-being, education, learning and/or inclusion.

Diversity and Inclusion: We foster inclusion and support diversity within our organisation and wider community by promoting equal opportunities, respecting differences, and supporting initiatives that celebrate diversity.

Environmental Sustainability: We support environmental sustainability initiatives that contribute to a healthier planet, reduce our ecological footprint, and promote eco-friendly practices.

Our ESG Model

Our commitments are as follows:

Helping local communities to manage and recover from negative impacts e.g.

Covid Recovery

Our team work directly with patients, citizens, carers and communities in a variety of ways. We have supported carers to develop a new strategy to help give voice to their experience of service withdrawals and reductions during covid, with the direct caring risks created by delivering care as well as indirect risks created by increasing isolation during covid-19. We have worked on schemes and projects aiming to support organisations to regain and sustain momentum, post Covid (e.g. hospital discharge and community capacity building, and community/individual engagement to learn lessons).

Tackling economic inequality – creating new businesses, jobs and skills, and increasing supply chain resilience and capacity.

We have deep experience of supporting communities to develop better education and employment opportunities to tackle deprivation, exclusion and poor outcomes. Paid work experience opportunities are available through our business's commercial activity, and we currently support three adult learners with skills development in financial management (invoicing, cash flow, pension planning, HMRC returns etc); development, production and maintenance of policies (HR, Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety etc.) and social media management (website development, blog content etc.)

We collaborate with other businesses to invest in growth and we operate as volunteers and trustees supporting local organisations to sustain and develop. We invest in local suppliers and support supply chain resilience with ethical purchase and supply practices (paying on time, governing relationships through contracts, co-opting inputs from subject matter experts who wish to work flexibly etc.)

Fighting climate change – effective stewardship of the environment and supporting carbon net zero and carbon reduction plan

We are committed to playing our part in supporting environmental measures. We aim to ensure that our commercial activity supports carbon reduction through strategies, and actions designed to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases (GHGs) emitted into the atmosphere. We implement energy efficiency measures with energy-saving practices in home office spaces to reduce emissions. This includes using LED lighting, smart thermostats, and energy-efficient appliances. We focus on remote work encouraging an off site or hybrid work model that helps reduce the need for office space and the associated energy consumption. This also lowers the carbon emissions from employee commuting.

We discourage air travel in our business as an exception as flights, are a major source of carbon emissions. We encourage virtual meetings and video conferencing for client discussions, team collaboration, and internal meetings. We have introduced awareness to carbon offsetting to compensate for unavoidable emissions supporting schemes that invest in tree planting or carbon capture. Our expenses policy encourages public transport & carpooling for travel, promoting public transport, carpooling, or the use of electric vehicles to help reduce the carbon footprint of commuting and on site work. We encourage sustainable procurement and supply chain operation with green procurement aimed at sourcing materials, office supplies, and technology from sustainable vendors or those with low-carbon production processes to help reduce emissions.

We opt for energy-efficient servers, cloud-based solutions, and paperless systems to lower emissions and we have developed informal sustainability partnerships - partnering with other firms in the sector that have strong sustainability ambitions. We have initiated annual assessment of our carbon footprint by measuring energy use, waste generation, travel emissions, and other relevant metrics. This provides a baseline to track future improvements.

Our Carbon Reduction Plan (CRP) has been developed in detail by all Managing Partners; the figures for 2025/26 for Carbon Reduction are set out below.

Our 25/26 calculations are as follows:

| Category | Assumption | Annual Usage | Emission Factor | Annual Emissions CO2 |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Home Office Electricity | 200 kWh per month | 2,400 kWh | 0.233 kg CO2 per kWh | 559.2 kg CO2 |
| Train Travel | 50 miles (80.5 km) per week | 4,186 km | 0.041 kg CO2 per km | 171.6 kg CO2 |
| Minimal Commuting | Minimal commuting emissions | 2000 km | 0.047 kg CO2 per km | 94kg CO2 |
| Home Office Paper Use | 5 kg per year | 5 kg | 2.84 kg CO2 per kg | 14.2 kg CO2 |
| Total | | | | 839 kg CO2 |

We aim to support achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2035 by monitoring and further reducing our carbon footprint and offsetting any unmitigable emissions.

In summary, we have shifted to hybrid vehicles, using trains/car sharing or staying local, and working from home, we are paper free, we encourage and support the utilisation of electronic communication and interaction platforms to minimise travel, we are a smarter recycler, using re-useable water bottles, switching computers off and not leaving idle, switching lights off in workplace etc. and we utilise green energy suppliers to help us deliver good outcomes.

We focus on codesign and co-delivery with local communities, stakeholders and anchor institutions to leverage effective stewardship (e.g. recent capital developments inclusive of bio net gain requirements and renewable energy) and we support societal change to build on existing community assets.

Where relevant and possible, we aim to deliver environmental benefits through a commitment to:

- Going car-free or car-sharing
- Staying local
- Using hybrid vehicles
- Supporting working from home to minimise commuting
- Encouraging and supporting the utilisation of MS Teams as a communication platform to minimise travel
- Being mostly paperless
- Being a smarter recycler
- Use of re-useable water bottles
- Switching computers off and not leaving idle
- Switching lights off in workplace

Equal opportunity – reducing the disability employment gap and tackling workforce inequality.

We have strategic partnerships with organisations that work with us to ensure access to opportunities and inclusion. We are a member of the Chambers of Commerce through which we network to support rural business development and women in business. Our team are committed to ensuring opportunities through our internal business commitments. We network through a variety of channels to support innovation and enterprise.

We have an Equality and Diversity Policy in our business, and we are supported to focus on the importance of co-delivery by our partner – Pathways CIC, who specialise in engagement, self-advocacy, co-production and training with and for people with learning disability and/ or autism.

We support organisations to further their goals of enabling better delivery of youth, play, flying start, early years, adult learning, frailty, elder care and digital inclusion through re-designed services, as mechanisms to tackle inequalities in deprived communities.

Wellbeing – improving health, wellbeing and community integration.

We have strategic partnerships with organisations that work with us to ensure access to opportunities and inclusion. We are a member of the Chambers of Commerce through which we network to support rural business development and women in business.

We have an Equality and Diversity Policy in our business, and we are supported to focus on the importance of co-delivery by our partner – Pathways CIC, who specialise

in engagement, self-advocacy, co-production and training with and for people with learning disability and/ or autism.

We support organisations to further their goals of enabling better delivery of youth, play, flying start, early years, adult learning, frailty, elder care and digital inclusion through re-designed services, as mechanisms to tackle inequalities in deprived communities.

Our team work on a variety of projects aimed at supporting and improving health, integration and wellbeing and we ensure an internal commitment to work life balance and 'down time' in our lifestyles.

Some of the key strategies and approaches we have implemented to support wellbeing include:

- Working to the principles of a Mindfulness Charter
- Promoting a non-judgemental culture
- Encouraging dedicated and regular time out for physical exercise and/or other mindfulness activities. We always respect rest periods/flexible working agreements, allowing people to have effective "switch off" time.
- Deploying an approach where we ask for and provide feedback to others on a regular basis and treat internal colleagues and external contacts with the upmost level of respect and courtesy at all times.

Supporting Innovation

We are a team that focuses on work in sectors that innovate including within nature based solutions in health, green finance and improving health outcomes and better health in business for customers, employees and communities and in education (through colleges and institutes).

We seek out opportunities to develop new solutions to health and care challenges through the use of technology, natural and community assets.

Measurement and Reporting

We support our clients to assess the measurable impact of our activity (with and for them) by quantifying our ESG and social value contribution as part of contract submission and award (where applicable). We establish metrics and indicators to measure the impact of any ESG and social value initiatives that we include within contract proposals. We equip our delivery team with the ability and responsibility to regularly report on our contributions to social value for clients, so that clients can be assured of delivery against our commitments and impact against our shared intentions.

Continuous Improvement

We regularly review and assess our ESG and social value initiatives to identify opportunities for improvement and innovation, ensuring that our efforts align with the evolving needs of communities.

Communication and Awareness

We communicate our commitment to ESG and social value internally and externally, raising awareness among employees, stakeholders, and the wider community about our social impact initiatives.

Conclusion

Consortium24 is committed to creating ESG and social value and making a positive impact in the communities we serve. This policy reflects our dedication to social responsibility and contributing to a better society beyond our core business activities.

Julie Haywood,
Managing Partner
10/01/2025