



# ASSESSING SOCIAL VALUE

Social value assessments are attracting growing attention as an alternative way of quantifying, reviewing and prioritising organisational investment and decisions. The public sector is increasingly requiring the private sector, whether as partners or in development proposals, to demonstrate added social value.

## Social value assessments can be used for a range of purposes including:

- To demonstrate the benefits of development proposals and planning applications
- In support of bids to be partners with public sector organisations
- To assess the social value of your supply chain
- To assess policies, programmes and plans
- For corporate social responsibility and auditing purposes.

There are many benefits from considering social value when planning a development. It can help companies speed up the planning process, boost their chances of winning public sector procurement tenders (e.g. to be development partners), and improve relations with local councils. In addition, demands for planning obligations (S106) could be reduced if communities and local government believe a project is making a valuable contribution to the public good.

## What is Social Value?

Social Value was introduced as a voluntary code for the public sector in the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012. Since then it has achieved considerable and growing attention with an increasing number of both public and private sector organisations adopting its approach. Several local authorities are currently considering the introduction of social value into the planning process through planning conditions or obligations.

Social value covers a wide range of factors that broadly align with sustainability:

- Economic outcomes – creating jobs for local people, supporting young people and the long-term unemployed into work and enhancing local skills;
- Social outcomes – improving the health and wellbeing of local residents and employees, consideration of equality and diversity, promotion of the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and reduction of health inequalities; and
- Environmental outcomes – protection and enhancement of the natural environment, efficient use of resources, minimising waste, and reduction of carbon emissions.

