



# **Social Value Strategy**

# Our Legacy

We are an intelligent workforce underpinned by three guiding principles – ‘our people, promise and progress’

Working with our whole supply chain, we are committed to one shared responsibility – generating true social value to create a better, more equal world for all to live and work.

As a business, we are determined to create a positive legacy within our communities, offer sustainable career pathways, and generate shared returns. Our philosophy of collaboration and an innovative corporate mindset will enable us to deliver this together.

- Sat Nijjer  
CEO, Fortel



# Contents

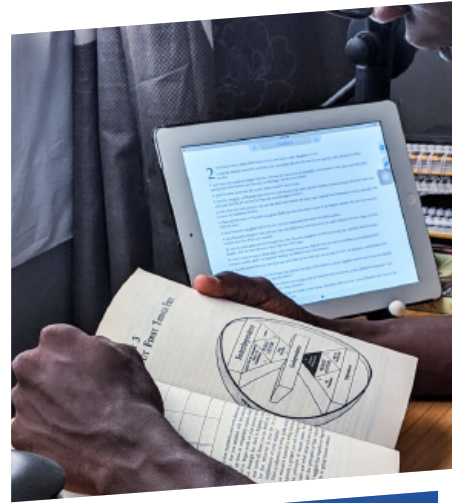
- 1 Our Impact
- 2 Our Drivers
- 3 Our Strategy
- 4 Case Studies



# Our Impact



Training Academy  
**1100**  
Trainees  
Per Annum



**56** Apprentices  
on our projects

We provide a catalogue of pre-employability training for our recruits as well as accredited training opportunities.



**Rehab Programme**

Prisoner day release programme with the Ministry of Justice  
Supporting ex-Offenders 50% increase year on year.

We have supported **50+** Charities

Our Promise is underpinned by a combination of direct community work and engagement with charities.

Whether this work impacts our local community in the West Midlands or further afield, such as our mission to India, we want to be sure that what we do has a tangible impact on those who may need our help.





## Business Support

Around 25% of our total spend is with small and medium sized businesses, supporting the development of local economies.

## 100% Local Employment

We are able to offer people in our community credible work in an exciting construction environment, an ability to develop and a genuine improvement in meaningful long-term employment.

We consistently achieve 100% local employment on a wide range of projects, providing opportunities to help build skills.



## Mental Health Support

We prioritise the mental health of our People, offering a variety of support to encourage openness and discussion to support positive change.

All Fortel employees have access to Life Works, the world's largest Employee Assistance Programme, combining modern employee assistance, wellness, recognition and incentive programmes into a unified total well-being solution.



## Mental Health Programme

All our site supervisors are trained by MIND for better mental health support. We are continuing to work with the charity, Samaritans, on a project by project basis. We are developing key wellbeing e-modules to under pin our training matrix.



## Covid-19

We were quick to develop and share a toolkit and guidance for staff to support them during the lockdown period. We are continuing to monitor the health and wellbeing of our staff as the lockdown period continues.

## Disability

We have a number of strategies in place to prevent discrimination, such as our "disability guarantee interview scheme" where we will guarantee an interview for anyone who has a disability. Our recruitment process is based only on merit.

## Creating Value

Our business is defined by our three guiding principles of People, Promise and Progress.

# People

We recognise that our people are our greatest asset. We put our people first when it comes to making decisions and we act in a socially responsible way across all our operations and projects.

# Promise

We understand the importance of benchmarking and improving the impacts of our business. We commit to measuring our environmental and social impact at the local and national scale through a curated set of key performance indicators. On top of standard performance metrics, we are adopting the National TOMS framework to allow us to quantify social impact measurement.

# Progress

We promote a culture of continuous improvement within our business and our supply chain. We will continue to apply a combined set of performance indicators to track and shape our progress, including corporate financial returns and social and environmental performance indicators.

### Awards & Recognition



### Supported Schools & Charities



## Generating Social Value

Our three guiding principles also underpin our approach to managing and creating social value.

When we talk about bottom line profit, we see this as encapsulating financial returns as well as positive innovation on social and environmental issues.

This allows us to measure the full cost of doing business. We believe that this will help us to set ambitious sustainability goals that are tailored to our business and will support us in generating social value.

In line with our values, we define social value as operating in a way that consciously creates positive outcomes for the communities we affect.

Whilst we recognise that the goal for any organisation addressing social value is to deliver benefits for affected communities, at FORTEL we are also acutely aware of the need to diagnose and mitigate unintended, negative impacts that may be felt by our communities.

Impact needs to be balanced and beneficial to all to be considered truly valuable.



## Our Drivers

Our commitment to creating social value is driven by external factors, including the legislative and policy landscape, and our corporate operating philosophy.

## Corporate Operating Philosophies

Fortel is driven by an internal ambition to be a responsible business that creates shared value for our staff and the communities we work in. These philosophies have long formed the basis of our

business-as-usual operations. This provides us with a strong foundation on which to create a contemporary, sophisticated approach to social value generation.



## Our Strategy

We have adopted a simple: plan, do, measure, review strategy for managing our social value strategy and the resulting impacts moving forwards:

### Plan Our Pledge

We are committed to integrating social value into each and every one of our projects. We have defined this through a set of key pledges:

We pledge to provide employment and training opportunities that are available to the local communities we operate within.

We pledge to champion the use of small and medium sized businesses to help foster sustainable, inclusive economic growth.

We pledge to reduce the environmental damage we cause through construction activities by monitoring the waste generated throughout our supply chain and continuing to implement strategies for reducing our carbon footprint.

We pledge to support social agendas by:

- Never discriminating against a person in the workplace and wider society
- Monitoring labour standards throughout our supply chain
- Work with local councils and governments to understand local needs and ensure we leave a positive legacy.

### Do Implementation

We have implemented several work streams to help us meet our social value pledges:

We are utilising Tools that set out project specific controls, measures and strategy updates to ensure a bespoke and optimised approach for each of our contracts.

We have appointed a dedicated member of our team to manage and drive our social value strategy.

We will continue to measure our impacts and outcomes in relation to social value to refine and improve our strategy.

We are engaged in a range of activities to improve economic, environmental and social sustainability across our business, including:

#### Economic

- Creating jobs and employing from local communities
- Using our new LEAF local employee selector and recruiting from diverse and underprivileged groups.
- Creating apprenticeships / placement & graduate training opportunities
- Actively seeking out and engaging SMEs on our projects and adhering to principles of prompt payment.

#### Environmental

- Monitor emissions and gas levels and water usage across our sites and projects
  - Reducing waste percentages by identifying opportunities for reducing waste as well as procuring more sustainable materials.
  - Reduce pollution by championing techniques such as multi-person transport
- Continuing to review and develop environmental policy and prevention strategies

#### Social

- We have appointed a dedicated member of our team to drive our social value strategy.
- We will publish our strategy and performance results publicly.

# Measure

## TOMS Social Value Framework

We have identified several tools and frameworks to help us build a representative, granular understanding of our business' true social impact:

We have adopted the TOMS Social Value Framework and will work within its guidelines to measure and monitor the social value generated through our projects.

We will capture diversity, training, and development data from our LEAF recruitment system, with targets set around increasing the diversity of our workforce, supporting the development of our employees, and reducing staff turnover rates.

# Review

## Reporting & championing

We understand that generating and managing social value is never complete, and as such we will continue to review and update our social value strategy. We have appointed social value champions within the business who will monitor our performance against our strategy. The strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis and amendments will be based on the performance data we gather.

We will publish our social value strategy and results on our website to ensure we remain accountable to the commitments we have made and the people we impact.





## CASE STUDIES

We are continuing to focus on projects that generate social value, such as protecting the environment with innovation in fuel additive technology and supporting the relief of those in poverty on a local and international level. Examples of our recent work are set out as follows:



### 1. Punjab, India Charity Event

Every year we visit Punjab, India and host a charity event to help those with disabilities and unable to afford treatment. In 2019, our donations enabled 350 eye operations to be performed. Our 2020 event was cancelled owing to Covid-19, but we are planning to re-start the initiative as soon as it is safe for all parties.



### 2. Birmingham to Bath Charity Ride

A team of Fortel staff, friends and family cycled from Birmingham to Bath, raising money for charities supporting the young and homeless. This included the Railway Children, St Giles Hospice and the Homeless in India.



### 3. Children's Nursery Cleaning

At the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020, our Group Business Nexus cleaned and decontaminated a children's nursery near to their head offices. This enables a safe environment for students and staff to return to school in.

## 4. Rehab Programme

Fortel and HMP Sudbury partnership offers workplace rehabilitation.

**"I am very grateful for Fortel Services and HMP Sudbury for giving me this opportunity, it is also giving me a great chance to provide again for my wife and 2 children and it is also helping me maintain my family life"**

– JS\*

Second chances can be hard to come by, especially when looking for work with a criminal record, but for ex-offenders, finding work is a vital step towards successfully reintegrating into society and supporting themselves and their families.

Someone who experienced this firsthand is 'JS' who, despite sending out a number of CV's to companies, struggled to get any response despite being fully qualified for the roles that they were applying for.

When Fortel heard about their struggles we made it our mission to help them find work.

Taking a proactive approach, we contacted HMP Sudbury to discuss a partnership that would enable 'JS' to work for us on day release with the support and sponsorship of us as their employer.

Following successful discussions with HMP Sudbury we went ahead with the scheme and have now successfully placed them into work.

We hope to continue to work closely with HMP Sudbury and find further work opportunities for prisoners and ex-offenders.

\*Name not included to protect identity of subject







**5. Gary Benson**  
**Ex-Armed Forces Personnel**

We are proud to have a number of ex-service staff amongst our people - an honour which we are committed to maintaining. Gary Benson spent nine years on active service in the army from 1983, including five tours of Northern Ireland and overseas postings.

After making the traditionally difficult transition to civilian life, he managed to secure employment in a number of security and driving jobs. However, the financial impact of unexpectedly losing a job and the struggle to find work after that led to Gary being made homeless.

With support from the Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI) Fortel and Kier, Gary was provided with accommodation and opportunities to put him back on his feet in 2018. Working with RBLI, Fortel and Kier identified Gary as being suitable for a role on the M20 J3-5 SMP.

He was taken on as a Traffic Marshall, a role which has given him a taste of life in the construction industry and encouraged him to seek further training and new opportunities. Kam Dale, Contracts Manager, said: "The transition from life in the Armed Forces to civilian life is notably difficult and Gary is one of many to experience that.

"However, seeing him shine when given the opportunity to learn new skills and gain new experiences is proof of the value that those who have served in the Armed Forces can bring."



**6. Ravi Ghuman**  
**Continuous Workforce Development**

Ravi Ghuman joined Fortel through our Graduate Scheme as a Financial Analyst and has gained valuable insight into the construction sector over the last 12 months.

In line with our commitment to continuous workforce development, Ravi has worked with a number of our teams, gaining valuable insight into our operation as a whole and the wider industry.

Ravi has spent time with our office based purchasing, payroll and credit control departments, as well as on-site with our subcontract delivery teams. Finding a suitable Graduate placement was initially tricky for Ravi, who will soon be joining Fortel as a permanent member of staff.

He said: "It is quite hard to get on a placement scheme, not a lot of companies do it.

"When I first started I didn't know anything about the construction industry but I have learned a lot.

"It has really opened my eyes, as with all of the new experiences I have enjoyed, the possibilities for my future have widened."



**7. Maisy Knox**  
**Apprenticeship Success**

Maisy joined Fortel straight from school through the company's Apprenticeship Scheme after making a firm decision that her future lay in practical working experience rather than Further Education.

It was a decision she felt 100% confidence in and she chose Fortel over other offers in order to pursue what she saw as an interesting and unique career in the Construction industry.

She has thrived in the Fortel working environment, taking on increased responsibility at every opportunity and succeeding in new challenges.

Maisy said: "Going straight into work has given me a head-start, I have structure and a purpose to my life.

"Fortel have given me so much support and encouragement, I feel like I am growing everyday and learning more about the construction industry.

"As an apprentice and moving into a full-time employee, it has been particularly encouraging to have the opportunity to get help from the senior management team when I need it."

## 8. Engaging & Educating Young People

Senior Fortel staff formed part of a panel of business leaders from across the UK and Europe to inspire STEM learning amongst year 11 and 12 students at Kingsmead School in Hednesford.

Alongside representatives from a variety of STEM related sectors, Fortel helped students apply their learning to real-life situations. The event, Maths in Action, saw students take part in a role play electronic reverse auction, as well as being given tips on presentation skills.

Students also learnt about profit, loss

such as cheapest price not always being the most cost effective solution.

Chair of Governors Chris Hunt said: “This event exemplified everything we are trying to achieve at Kingsmead: students were offered extremely demanding challenges derived from ‘real-world’ situations.

“They responded magnificently and we are enormously grateful to the leaders from business and industry who donated both their time and their expertise to support us in our determination that for Kingsmead students the sky’s the limit.”



## 9. West Midlands Training Academy

The brand-new West Midlands Training Academy will form a key part of the new Fortel HQ on Junction 10.

This facility will be used to train, encourage and welcome people from under-represented communities within the construction industry, such as women and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

The facility is set to formally open towards the end of 2020 and will form part of the company’s environmentally

friendly approach to operations as solar power will be utilised.

More than 220 people have received training through the academy so far, prior to this official opening.

This, accompanied by Fortel’s environmentally friendly fleet is a testament to the company’s eco credentials.

CEO Sat Nijjer said: “The West Midlands Training Academy will create a lasting



social value legacy, empowering a new generation with the skills and confidence to close the skills gap and make a major contribution to UK

## Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate Social Responsibility refers to a company’s social accountability to itself, its stakeholders, and the wider community. Using our network of clients and suppliers we are continuing to develop initiatives and solutions which benefit society, the environment and business. Our approach to social value is supported by a mixture of client and internal led initiatives, as outlined above.

We are driven by a desire to leave a positive legacy in the communities we work in and generate social value throughout our supply chain. Delivering against our commitments has defined our approach to generating social value in our business and supply chain.



## Creating Shared Value

Creating Shared Value is about allowing a company to generate revenue and profit, whilst bringing sustainable benefits to society and community. Key areas where we focus on creating shared value include:

### Improving Productivity in the Value Chain

Engaging 'local' businesses and small enterprises in procurement to share growth opportunities and support the creation of new job opportunities and training.

Improving energy, water and resource efficiency by actively sourcing low carbon and renewable energy solutions.

### Community Investment

We are continuing our involvement with numerous charitable programmes through time and resource donations.

We also support our own registered charity, Fortel Aid, which provides help to those in need across India.

We regularly report on and promote our community investment to keep affected groups engaged.

### Developing Products & Markets

We champion the use of new suppliers and SME organisations, where relevant, to facilitate innovation in our work.

We have investment in the development of new smart hats that monitor user's health and are currently in talks to develop a revolutionary concrete delivery technique that will reduce haulage distance and reduce carbon.

### Communicating our Initiatives

Making donations is a large part of our history and values. We now understand the importance of shifting towards an outcomes-based approach to generating social value. In line with this, we are moving towards longer term investments that create consistent and long-term social, economic, and environmental benefits for affected communities and spaces.

### Taking Action

Defining and leading on projects to define the scope of shared and social value so that stakeholders are working towards the same goals.

Integrating shared value into our business and projects to provide positive outcomes for local economies.

Creating partnerships with our suppliers, local organisations, and NGOs to deliver beneficial activities for communities.

External landscape:

## Legislation, Policy & Societal Expectations

The Social Value Act, coupled with changes in government policy and shifting expectations of society, has reinforced the importance of demonstrating our business' contribution to society.

The Social Value Act applies to the procurement of the provision of services, or the provision of services together with the purchase of hire goods for carrying out of works. It requires consideration, at the pre-procurement stage, of how procurement

could improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the relevant area.

Fortel are committed to taking action across these three areas:



**Cost of Doing Business**



**Environmental Effects**



**Social Effects**



# UN Sustainable Development Goals

The increased value of responsible business activities and strong social and environmental purpose is underpinned by the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015 and

emphasise a holistic approach to achieving sustainable development for all. Fortel are committed to helping the United Nations achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and have specific processes and policies in place to address each topic.

## 1. No Poverty

We are continuing to support local and global charities to help achieve this goal alongside our own projects.

## 2. Zero Hunger

We will support all government efforts to eradicate hunger and we will also conduct our own charitable efforts to help feed the hungry in our local area.

## 3. Good Health & Wellbeing

We prioritise the health and wellbeing of all our employees and we commit to working with our supply chain to increase awareness and practical action on health and wellbeing.

## 4. Quality Education

We believe education is key and should be available all over the world. Therefore, we are creating more apprenticeships, placements and graduate schemes that will be opened to applications from across the globe.

## 5. Gender Equality

We are committed to the women in construction initiative and will continue to support all gender equality rights. We will continue to report on our gender pay gap and are within a process to revamp our EDI strategy to ensure it is effective and relevant.

## 6. Clean Water

We believe clean water should be a basic human right and therefore will continue to support all government efforts.

## 7. Affordable & Clean Energy

We are working at how we can power our business using clean energy. A focus on clean energy and low carbon solutions underpins the development of our new offices.

## 8. Decent Work, Economic Growth

Fortel is a large employer across the UK and we are committed to helping economic growth by creating job opportunities and apprenticeships alongside supporting small and medium sized businesses in the areas we work.

## 9. Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure

We will help develop quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure, and promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization. This approach can be seen in the design of our new offices as well as our investment in our new, lower carbon transport fleet.

## 10. Reduce Inequality

We support empowering and promoting the social, economic, and political inclusion of all. This is reflected in our EDI strategy and recruitment policies, as well as the charities we support through financial and time donations.

## 11. Sustainable Cities & Communities

We ensure that local recruitment and employment is high on our agenda when supplying staff to various projects. This in line ensures that the money earned by the local community is spend in the local borough. Our aim is always to ensure that we upskill our workforce from a project to project basis, therefore the local workforce will also be upskilled while they are with us, which then ensures sustainable employment for the individual.

## 12. Responsible Consumption & Production

We ensure that our clients are aware of techniques and opportunities related to energy saving in our work. We work towards offering solutions that utilise sustainable products and produce carbon savings on their respective projects.

## 13. Climate Action

We are actively reducing our carbon footprint by investing in a newer, more efficient transport fleet and exploring opportunities for utilising fuel additive solutions in our vehicles. The design of our new, low energy office building reflects our commitment to addressing climate issues.

## 14. Life Below Water

We are committed to reducing pollution and will continue to support all government efforts to reduce water pollution.

## 15. Life On Land

We are committed to reducing our pollution and will continue to support all government efforts to reduce land pollution.

## 16. Peace & Justice Strong Institutions

Fortel will continue to support anti-crime, abuse, exploitation, and trafficking charities. In compliment to this, we will also continue our own projects around this area, including our prisoner reform programme.

## 17. Partnerships to Achieve the Goal

We will continue to support and work with organisations across the globe to ensure we collectively achieve the UN SDGs.