

SOCIAL VALUE CHAMPION:

How to embed social value creation

Putting social value at the heart of project delivery is one of the many ways Octavius delivers the wider benefits that a modern, integrated transport network can bring to local communities



For Octavius, ensuring the communities we work alongside are still able to thrive during our presence is as important as the infrastructure we create. As the public face of our customers it is imperative that our teams are seen as good neighbours. This approach extends outwards to our choice of supply chain partners, who need to demonstrate that they share our commitment to community before they can work with us.

Among the ways we achieve this is placing **social value creation at the heart of the way** our project teams are structured and operate. It is an approach proven to deliver.



| Social value bottom line

Octavius has a committed target of delivering social value equivalent to 30 per cent of our turnover. This created more than £110 million of social value in financial year 2024 to 2025. In support of this corporate objective, we use the Impact Evaluation Standard to create the framework for our social value plan, we record and measure social value outputs using the Thrive social value platform.

Consistent, repeatable success is ensured by three primary elements: resources, culture and process. Unless all three are demonstrably part of a contractor's approach to project delivery their ability to create social value consistently and at scale may be compromised.

Octavius has a designated Social Value Team whose sole purpose is to work across all areas of the business, embedding a social value culture and enabling its creation. The team has the backing of our leadership, who see social value not as nice-to-have, icing on the cake – but a core component of how we delight our customers by delivering projects the Octavius Way.



| Social value in action

This culture permeates through the business to the people delivering projects across the country. It also extends outwards to the company's choice of supply chain partners; who need to demonstrate their own social value achievements, and a commitment to supporting Octavius' social value initiatives before they can work with us. It even extends to our customers, and we seek out opportunities to work with customers who clearly put a premium on social value and who are looking for delivery partners who share this world view.

All of this is supported by a mature, robust process. Beginning at the tender stage, for both frameworks and individual projects, we set targets for what we want to achieve in terms of social value. Different regions and different communities have different needs, so our next step is to understand what 'local' looks like at a project level.

During the tender stage we utilise local partnerships wherever possible. This ensures project budgets are channelled into local communities by sustaining local jobs, and allows us to harness local knowledge that can help enrich our engagement with the community. We also seek to identify local SME's and voluntary, community and social enterprises who we may be able to support, meaning we consider the long-term impact of our social value activities.

| Mapping social value

After award, the project team and social value team carry out community mapping to identify key stakeholders, and understand the needs of the local area and the touchpoints. In tandem with this is work to understand the client's aspirations and targets.

During the development stage there is also dialogue between the social value team and project manager to help identify social value opportunities. All these activities feed into the creation of the social value strategy which is integrated with project communication and stakeholder management plans. Once the strategy is implemented, a key element is the accurate recording of activities and evaluation of their outcomes.

Coffee mornings and charity fundraising are among the more common place activities. But Octavius plays to its strengths so we have also built car parks for charities and play areas for schools.

A trio of projects for combined authorities help illustrate what our approach to creating social value looks like on the ground: March town centre revitalisation, Charfield new-build station and Manchester Victoria North East Gateway.

March town centre revitalisation

The primary client was [Cambridgeshire County Council](#), [Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority](#) provided additional funding and oversight. Octavius created social value to the equivalence of £2.12 million. This was achieved through supporting [FACET](#), a March-based charity providing training and day care to adults with disabilities; creating an apprenticeship, and extensive use of local suppliers. Among countless other social value activities Octavius even paid for the town-centre Christmas Tree which [brought March international attention](#).

Charfield station

[Charfield's new station project](#) is funded by the [City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement for the West of England Combined Authority](#). As the project commences, the team has worked with community groups and schools to raise awareness of the scheme and its benefits. These efforts have helped embed the project within the local context.



Manchester Victoria North East Gateway

Octavius is **Manchester City Council's** principal contractor for the project. The scheme is among the larger infrastructure elements of **Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Bee Network**. During the Victoria North East Gateway project, the team's contribution to the community included:

- Prioritising direct local employees
- Supporting school and college events
- Working collaboratively with charitable partner Mustard Tree to:
 - Support unemployed people into work
 - Provide a meaningful work placement paying the Real Living wage
 - Invested £200 in initiatives to tackle homelessness
 - Provided volunteers
- Invested £2,000 to refurbish and donate laptops and smartphones to those in need as part of the Manchester City Council digital inclusion initiative
- Volunteered time and money for MCR Active health and wellbeing initiatives
- Provided donations in kind to Manchester Seed Library initiative
- Provided cash donation to support Read MCR 'See myself in books' festival in partnership with the National Literacy Trust

Making **social value a core element** of the way in which the company delivers projects is one of the many ways in which Octavius has aligned itself with combined authorities' priorities.



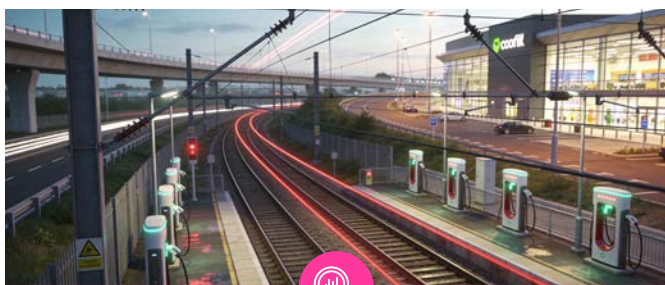
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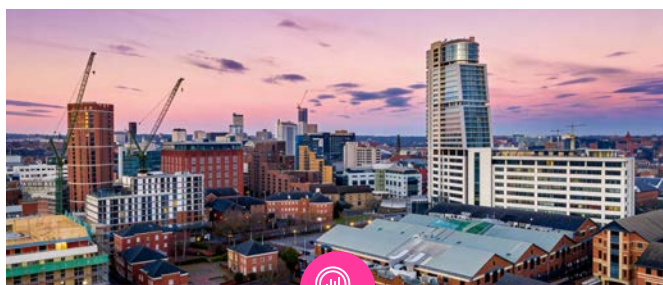
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Collaborative working comes
to the forefront



Electrification in the age of
enterprise delivery



Northern growth reinforces
national reach



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Contact us at Transformative@Octavius.co.uk if you
want to know more about the way in which we can
support combined authorities' transport strategies.