

Social Value Management Certificate Case Study: Mears Group



Mears is one of the UK's leading housing and care providers to both the public and private sector, with over 12,000 employees, working with clients to help develop, fund and implement their placemaking ambitions.

Our business is founded in local communities where we deliver the highest standards of care to people, their homes and their environment. We strongly believe in the benefits of combining housing and care approaches, to give the best possible service and to help tackle the deep rooted challenges to the NHS and Social Care.

Our housing teams provide rapid response and planned maintenance services for a portfolio of homes nationwide. We provide contact centre solutions, housing management, regeneration and build new homes, working with clients to help shape better places.

Our care teams deliver approximately 180,000 hours of care and support each week on behalf of 127 local authorities and a number of Clinical Commissioning Groups, and provide care services to an increasing number of people who fund their own care. Over 6,000 care workers support 30,000 people, working in every region across the UK.

Why have you decided to undertake the Social Value Certificate organisational pathway?

Group Head of Customer Success Tracey Lyth said:

"Our commitment to social and diversity impact is exceptional. It's what makes Mears stand out in our sector and it's a concept that is embraced brilliantly by colleagues from Board to the front line. This certification is important because it enables us to demonstrate that what we do isn't just lip service – it's recognised on a global scale as being up to standard."

How have you formalised your commitment for Level One of the Social Value Certificate? What practices or processes are you putting in place?

If we didn't care about the people and communities we work with, we wouldn't be able to achieve this, and our organisation wouldn't survive. Putting social and diversity impact at the heart of our business isn't just the right thing to do – it makes

good business sense. We're committed to building a diverse and inclusive culture that goes beyond protected characteristics, attracting and retaining the best talent, and enabling all our colleagues to thrive.

We have a clear and ambitious 2 years documented strategy and plan, which will achieve fully embedded social and diversity impact in all aspects of our business, providing the solutions colleagues need to deliver effective social value outcomes.

Are there any other specific projects you are doing at the moment that are related to SROI/social value?

At Mears we intend to use our position as a provider of public service contracts and as a large-scale procurer to influence the direction of social impact in the UK. We want to see a system which delivers genuine impact to the lives of people in communities we work but also wherever the housing sector works.

To this end in 2019 we commissioned two key reports with the Think Tank Localis on Social Value measurement and with The Pledge on social mobility in the workplace.

Brighten all Corners: Maximising social value in place. Mears commissioned the think tank Localis to review the Social Value Act and see how it could be improved. They gathered an advisory board of experts in social value and from local and central government to examine if the nation is maximising government's annual £284bn procurement spend to deliver the promise of the Social Value Act.

We will be collaborating and publishing the key reports early 2020.

What have you learnt so far in your commitment for Level One of the Social Value Certificate? Is there anything that you believe you will gain or find useful in the next steps you will take for Level 2 of the Social Value Certificate?

From working to Level One of the Certificate we identified that we do not measure unintended outcomes – we intend to progress work to investigate and how we go about identifying and measuring these.

Our plans include how we will further develop our approach to social impact, diversity and inclusion, impact measurement and thought leadership, with a view to creating a diverse, highly skilled and engaged workforce, and positioning ourselves as a responsible business with a social heart.

Tracey Lyth – Group Head for Customer Success:

"We recently launched the social and diversity impact toolkit for 2020, which is available on our social value app available to Mears employees. We've got a plan to really ensure activity is centred throughout the organisation over 2020 and logged so that we can measure the real impact we make."

Please contact Gary Jackson for more information on Mears Group social value journey:

Position: Group Director of Marketing Communications & Customer Success

Email: gary.jackson@mearsgroup.co.uk

Telephone number: 0870 607 1400