

## Social Value Overview & Commitment

At Fresh Connect Limited, social value is not treated as a standalone initiative or a compliance exercise, but as a natural extension of how we operate as a regional fresh produce wholesaler and logistics provider. Our business sits at the intersection of food supply, local employment, community wellbeing and environmental responsibility, and we recognise that the decisions we make every day have a direct impact on people, communities and the environment around us. As such, our approach to social value is grounded in practical action, measurable outcomes and continuous improvement, aligned to the principles of the UK Government's Social Value Model (PPN 002).

We already deliver meaningful social value through our core operations. By prioritising local recruitment for warehouse, driver and office roles, we create accessible employment opportunities within the communities we serve. We use local recruitment channels and focus on role-specific requirements, helping to remove unnecessary barriers to entry while maintaining safety and service standards. Where appropriate, we provide entry routes that do not require prior experience, including apprenticeships and trainee roles supported by structured onboarding, supervision and on-the-job training. This has enabled individuals to develop skills, progress into sustained employment and build long-term careers within the business.

Our commitment to tackling economic inequality extends beyond our own workforce. Fresh Connect plays an active role in supporting SMEs, local producers and independent businesses across the food supply chain. We work with local farms and independent suppliers wherever feasible, helping to keep spend within the regional economy and support resilient local supply chains. We operate prompt payment practices, paying suppliers within agreed 30-day terms, recognising the importance of cashflow to smaller businesses. On the customer side, we support independent hospitality and catering businesses by providing reliable deliveries, flexible ordering and practical guidance on seasonal availability, substitutions and waste reduction, helping them operate efficiently in a challenging economic climate. Environmental responsibility is a key pillar of our social value approach. We began formal carbon emissions reporting in 2024, establishing a baseline and committing to a 49% reduction in emissions by 2030. This commitment is supported by a Carbon Reduction Plan that is reviewed annually and informed by year-on-year monitoring. Our actions focus on the areas where we can make the greatest impact, including logistics optimisation, fleet transition planning, energy efficiency improvements and sustainable sourcing. By working with local farms to reduce food miles, reducing non-recyclable packaging, purchasing "wonky" produce to prevent waste, and donating surplus food to local foodbanks, we deliver environmental benefits that are both measurable and closely aligned to our business model.

Wellbeing is equally central to how we operate. We recognise the physical and mental demands of working in a logistics-led environment and provide structured support to our employees through private healthcare, access to counselling, Mental Health First Aiders and wellbeing benefits such as Perkbox. We promote flexible working where operationally feasible, encourage regular breaks, and provide appropriate rest spaces to support health and safety. We also foster an inclusive workplace culture through recognition, open communication and team-building activities that bring colleagues together across different roles and functions.

Governance underpins our social value delivery. Our staff handbook sets out clear expectations around fair treatment, equal opportunity, wellbeing and reporting routes,

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ensuring accountability and consistency across the business. While we remain proportionate in our approach as an SME, we are committed to strengthening our social value governance over time through improved monitoring, internal reporting and alignment with recognised frameworks where appropriate.

Looking ahead, Fresh Connect is committed to building on the strong foundations already in place. We will continue to refine our approach to equal opportunity, economic inclusion, environmental sustainability and wellbeing in a way that is realistic, evidence-led and aligned to our growth. By embedding social value into our operations and tailoring delivery to local contract needs, we aim to be a responsible, reliable partner to our customers and contracting authorities, delivering outcomes that create lasting benefit for communities, the economy and the environment

**Signed**

*Ricky Scott*

**Ricky Scott**

**Director**

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