



Responsible Procurement Policy

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Equality and Welsh Language Impact Completion Date	5 th May 2024		
Approved & Ratified By:	University Executive Board	Date:	7 th May 2024
Date of Implementation	17 th July 2024		
Next Review Date	11 th November 2026		
Date Issued:	11 th November 2025		
Version Number	V2.0		

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1. Executive Summary

The University's procurement department directed **the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) Cymru** to perform a maturity review of our procurement process in 2022, which outlined the need for a Responsible Procurement Policy. We have created this policy to assist the University in improving its responsible procurement process in line with our emission reduction targets.

In accordance with this policy, Cardiff University will seek to minimise the internal demand for irresponsible goods, services, and works, whilst simultaneously increasing the ethical and sustainability requirements for our suppliers in line with environmental, social, and governance principles (ESG). We require all procurement, University staff and suppliers to adhere to the values outlined in our Responsible Procurement Policy.

In adherence to our procurement policy, all staff have a responsibility to consider the ESG impact of every purchase made on the University's behalf. The Responsible Procurement Policy is an extension of the Procurement Policy. As an extension of our Responsible Procurement policy, all suppliers have a responsibility to consider the ESG impact of their products services or works they provide and share our values in accordance with the Supplier Code of Conduct.

1.1. Our Core Values

Our Core Values are adapted from the **Welsh Government's Well-being of Future Generations Act Well-being Goals** and several of the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. These are as follows:

Well-being Goals:

- A Prosperous University
- A Resilient University
- A Healthier University
- A Globally Responsible University
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of more cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

SDGs:

- SDG 4 – Quality education.
- SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth.
- SDG 10 – Reduced inequalities.
- SDG 12 – Responsible consumption and production.
- SDG 13 – Climate action.
- SDG 14 – Life below water.
- SDG 15 – Life on land.

Whilst we recognise, and encourage suppliers to work alongside all 17 SDGs, the above are identified as goals that procurement can have a direct positive impact on.

1.2. Our Vision

Our vision is towards building an inclusive, responsible, and resilient future for our community and to bring ESG benefits and developments to Cardiff, Wales, and the wider World.

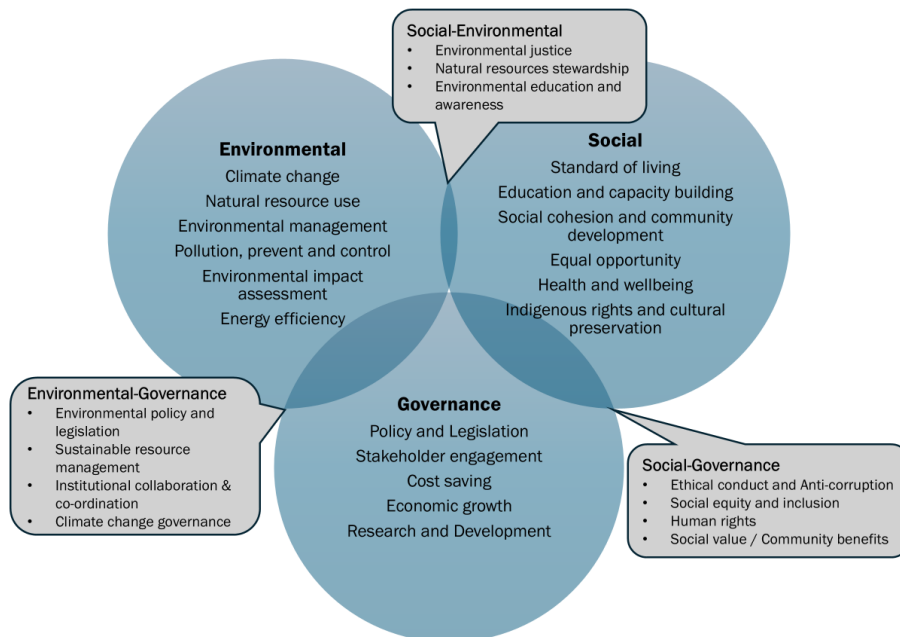
2. Introduction

Procurement is recognised as a key driver in securing broader ESG benefits for the city, region, and nation through decarbonisation, fair trade, labour practices, support for local businesses and communities. The University, therefore, has committed to creating a professional, academic and student learning environment that is socially cohesive and environmentally responsible.

2.1. Responsible Procurement

The definition given by the **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)** defines responsible procurement as ‘making sure that goods, services, and works procured achieve value for money on a life cycle cost basis and generate benefits not only for the organisation, but also for the society and the economy, whilst protecting the environment’.

To procure in a responsible way involves looking beyond short-term needs and considering the longer-term impacts of each purchase. Responsible Procurement is used to ensure that an organisation’s procurement activities reflect broader goals linked to resource efficiency, climate change, social responsibility, and economic resilience. As these aspects are often interlinked, it is useful to picture responsible procurement as follows:



In recognition of this, the University aims to meet its need for goods, services, and works in a way that achieves value for money but also delivers the optimal ESG impact throughout the life cycle of the goods, service or works being procured. More broadly, responsible procurement considers the following:

- Environmental impact of the growth, manufacture and transportation of goods, services, and works.
- Social and ethical implications.
- Governance, cost, and economic impact.

2.2. Scope

This Policy applies to procurement activities across the University at all points of the procurement cycle from defining requirements up until disposal and retendering contracts.

It is necessary to consider the impact of any goods, services, and works purchased up until their end of life, the decommissioning of any equipment, its usage, the delivery, its eventual disposal, and any other factors that would make up a whole life cycle approach to the assessment of the environmental, social, and economic impact. It is also necessary to consider the ESG impact of the supply chain of our suppliers.

This is in consideration to Section 8.1 of the **International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) 14001**, which outlines that organisations outsourced processes consider each life cycle stage.

2.3. Strategic Alignment

The development of this policy has considered **the strategic objective** of the University as well as the growing number of regulatory and policy requirements. For instance, **the Procurement Act 2023, Wales Procurement Policy Statement, the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, our Environmental Management System certified to ISO 14001:2015, the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 and Cardiff University’s Procurement Policy and Guidelines**. These, and more, inform and impact the manner in which the University manages its procurement activity.



[Procurement Act 2023](#)



[The Wellbeing of Future Generations.](#)



[UN Sustainable Development Goals.](#)



[Wales Procurement Policy Statement \(WPPS\)](#)



[Environmental Management System: ISO 14001:2015](#)



[Cardiff University’s Procurement Policy and Guidance.](#)

3. Our Aims

The key aims of this Responsible Procurement Policy are:

- a. *To deliver value, increase the knowledge of the benefits of Responsible Procurement and utilise the expertise within the University.*
- b. *Alignment to the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.*
- c. *Increase awareness of and engagement with our responsibility agenda among our present and prospective supply chain.*

3.1. Our Aims in Detail

3.1.1. *To deliver value, increase the knowledge of the benefits of Responsible Procurement and utilise the expertise within the University.*

How we will achieve this:

- Continue to ensure that all procurements including market engagement, the creation of suitable specifications, the evaluation of tenders and the contract management process take responsibility into account proportionately during the development of procurement strategies.
- Continue to ensure that all procurements are assessed using a Responsible Procurement Risk Assessment which will include the whole life costing.
- We will implement ESG related Tender Questions and monitor socially and environmentally responsible KPIs.
- We will continue to share responsible procurement training with the procurement team aimed at empowering the team to work with relevant schools and departments on identifying responsible procurement opportunities.
- We will create case studies focused on the ESG benefits gained since implementing the Policy.
- We will support the development of mandatory training for Staff in the University on Responsible Procurement.
- We will commit to developing our method of monitoring and evaluating the carbon footprint of the University's purchased goods, services, and works (Scope 3) to ensure our carbon reduction efforts are focused where they will have the greatest impact. We will challenge our suppliers to reduce their own footprints by encouraging suppliers to create carbon reduction plans (CRP) which we endeavour to mandate when possible.
- We shall keep advocating for more sustainability-based roles throughout the University including supporting the Responsible Procurement Internship and apprenticeship opportunities.
- We shall continue our work towards adoption of the **ISO 20400:2017 Sustainable Procurement Standard** as part of our continuous improvement roadmap through our delivery plan which ensures measurable responsible outcomes for improvement over the procurement of goods, services, and works.
- We shall ensure continued compliance with our **Environmental Management System ISO 14001:2015**

3.1.2. Alignment to the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

How we will achieve this:

- A Prosperous University: In alignment with SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), and 13 (climate action), we work with our key stakeholders and our supply chain to reduce energy, transport emissions, water and waste associated with the goods, services, and works purchased as well as supporting the University in achieving its carbon reduction targets.
- We promote equality and diversity through our procurement process by procuring in a manner aligned with the goal of A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language that does not preclude local and national companies, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), social enterprises, the voluntary and community sector, and minority owned businesses from tendering.
- To encourage economic growth in accordance to SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), we encourage local SMEs to join the University's electronic tendering system and the Welsh Government website [Sell2Wales](#) which will open up opportunities to tender for business >£30,000 which they wouldn't normally be aware of. We will also encourage the use of resources and services provided by Business Wales to support them.
- A Resilient University: We ensure our procurement decisions consider the long-term resilience of the supply chain through the procurement cycle e.g., Responsible Risk Assessment pre-tender, assessing supplier ESG offering and impact at evaluation stage and delivery against key performance indicators (KPIs) at contract management stage.
- We will continue to work with partners to support local businesses through engaging in business with the University and obtain their feedback to improve documentation and processes.
- A Healthier University: Where appropriate, consideration will be given to the evaluation of suppliers and their products on their adoption of health and well-being.
- Where possible, we will consider the impact of supplier practices on the well-being of workers in the supply chain and encourage suppliers to provide safe working conditions, fair wages, and development programmes for their employees.
- A Globally Responsible University: In alignment with SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), we promote ethical sourcing by selecting suppliers that adhere to internationally recognised labour standards, human rights practices, and fair-trade principles. Additionally, we aim to reduce our Scope 3 carbon emissions in relation to purchase of goods, services, and works.
- We shall continue to review our consumables spends in alignment with SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production) and SDG 14 (life below water) to identify single use plastics (SUPs) and engage with suppliers on alternative means

to reduce SUPs. This is to ensure that products can be reused, recycled, or repurposed at end of life to minimise waste where possible.

- Where possible, in alignment with SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), we will seek a circular economy, aiming for zero waste to landfill by ensuring that products can be reused or fully recycled at the end of their useful life.

3.1.3. Increase awareness of and engagement with our responsibility agenda among our present and prospective supply chain.

How we will achieve this:

- We will continue to encourage manufacturers and suppliers to continually improve the sustainability of their goods, services, and works by including responsibility KPIs and objectives into contracts and working with them in partnership to achieve continuous improvement.
- Within the evaluation of our tenders, we consider responsible procurement factors by promoting a target minimum weighting of 10% for all categories.
- We have produced a comprehensive Suppliers Code of Conduct that sets out the appropriate legislative requirement and drives improved performance through our supply chain that will be implemented.
- We will promote responsibility-related training throughout the University, including carbon literacy training.
- We will continue to collaborate and learn from organisations across the public, private and third sector to encourage and accelerate the transition to low carbon solutions.

4. Key Responsibility Themes

In collaboration with the relevant key stakeholders, the procurement team aims to deliver and implement responsible processes in the following key focus areas:

4.1. Environment

Environmental responsibility is our duty to keep an ecological balance within Earth's natural environment. It underscores the importance of conserving biodiversity and natural resources to sustain life on Earth. Our goal is to create an inclusive, resilient, and sustainable future for our community and improve environmental benefits for Cardiff, Wales, and the wider environment.

Organisations such as ours, with several campuses across the city, have a significant role to play in addressing the global concerns of biodiversity loss and climate change. Cardiff University is therefore committed to adopting responsible procurement practices. This will aim to minimise the environmental impact of our operations by placing greater emphasis on elimination, recycling, waste reduction, low carbon alternatives, and preventing harm on our natural estate to decrease CO2 emissions.

4.2. Social

Cardiff University recognises the effect that its activities have on people and society and will actively pursue methods to manage and recognise these impacts on our staff, students, suppliers, workers within our supply chain, as well as the local communities. We are committed to conducting our business activities in a fair and transparent manner with honesty and integrity. This commitment will encompass fair dealings with our suppliers, support equality and diversity initiatives as well as collaboration with the local communities to improve social and economic outcomes.

We shall ensure that we equip our staff with the relevant training needed to engage in procurement activities in a responsible manner. We shall seek ways to mitigate supply chain risks and create long and stable business relationships with our suppliers.

4.3. Governance

Governance serves as the foundation upon which corporate social responsibility and sustainability initiatives are developed and evaluated. This includes regulatory and legal compliance as well as use of resources and markets to achieve the overall organisational objective. We will ensure that all contracts are compliant with the relevant and current legislations (please see [Appendix 1](#) for the relevant legislations covering all public sector procurement).

The Welsh Government has placed a significant emphasis on foundational economy and growing SMEs. By spending a significant portion of our budget in Wales, we support Welsh companies to provide jobs and training in the local supply chain.

The University will ensure that each procurement activity undertaken by the procurement team considers 'Value for Money' by considering Whole Life Costing.

5. Key Responsibilities

The responsibility for effective implementation of this policy will be led by the Responsible Procurement Lead at Cardiff University who will delegate responsibility, where appropriate, to individuals and teams involved in the procurement process.

The Responsible Procurement Lead will be in charge of raising awareness of responsible procurement across the University and coordinating the development of relevant procurement policies and plans to support the implementation of this overarching Responsible Procurement Policy.

Other specific roles and responsibilities are set out below to ensure effective implementation of this policy.

5.1. Staff Responsibilities

Staff are required to:

- Always consider the need for the purchase and explore options for reusing and sharing existing assets.
- Give priority to sustainability and whole life cost at the pre-procurement stage.
- Undertake personal development to ensure that they acquire the necessary skills and knowledge required.
- Consider sustainability in every aspect of their daily activities.

5.2. Procurement Team Responsibilities

The procurement team is required to:

- At all times, embed responsible considerations within the University's procurement procedures, practices, and policies.
- Focus on managing the procurement of goods, services, and works that are either of high value, high volume, high ESG impact or a high ESG risk.
- Provide internal stakeholders with advice on sustainability issues relating to procurement and provide guidance regarding the application of this policy to their procurement activities.
- Actively engage with the supply chain (including local and small businesses) to ensure transparent communication on what our responsible procurement expectations are and undertake ongoing contract management as required.

5.3. Suppliers and Sub-contractors Responsibilities

Our suppliers and sub-contractors are required to:

- Contractually comply with this policy to the extent set out in their contract.
- Comply with the requirements set out in the Suppliers' Code of Conduct.
- Where applicable, to provide data and information on key sustainability data and impacts of their goods, services, and works and make commitment to improve their sustainability performance throughout the term of their contract with the University.
- Adhere to fair pay and labour law protections.

6. Communications

6.1. Communicating Policy to Internal Stakeholders

We shall ensure that this policy, supporting guidance, and information are communicated to our staff through:

- The induction process for new procurement employees.
- Ensuring that the Procurement staff have access to important Higher Education sector and other collaborative responsibility programmes and initiatives as well as the necessary training.
- The University's staff intranet site and University wide regular communications including 'Blas'.
- Training area on the Intranet that will be regularly updated in line with the needs of our customers.

6.2. Communicating Policy to External Stakeholders

Our external stakeholders include our suppliers, government and local authorities, education policy makers, accrediting agencies, funders, and the general public.

6.2.1. To our suppliers, we will communicate through:

- The University's tendering process using responsibility evaluation criteria and a "supplier self-assessment" programme for all other suppliers of goods, services, and works that are frequently purchased.
- The University's website along with our responsible procurement impact and action plan to ensure we perform against any targets set.
- Direct engagement with strategic suppliers with regards to compliance with our Supplier Code of Conduct.
- Use of lessons learnt and case studies to improve supplier engagement.

6.2.2. To the public, we will communicate through:

- Annual statement such as those required in line with the **Modern Slavery Act 2015**.
- The University's website alongside other relevant responsible action plans and impacts made over the year.

6.2.3. The University will additionally report annually to the **Higher Education Procurement Association (HEPA)** using the Higher Education Supply Chain Emissions tool (HESCET), and annually to the Welsh Government through carbon reporting.

7. Monitoring Compliance and Responsible Procurement Outcomes

Having a holistic view of our supply base helps to develop strategies to mitigate third-party risks and ensure transparency. It is therefore important for the University to ensure compliance through carrying out due diligence on prospective suppliers as well as regular and incident-driven contract performance reviews. These efforts will be geared towards minimising risk within the University's supply chain and ensure compliance with relevant local and international human rights and environmental laws.

We will measure our success by deploying the following KPIs to evaluate the efficiency of our supply chain. The table below sums up the relevant KPIs that will be deployed to evaluate our performance:

Advancing and Monitoring Our Responsible Procurement Goals (KPIs)

1. To deliver value, increase the knowledge of the benefits of Responsible Procurement and utilise the expertise within the University.

KPI / Objective	Description
Determine an appropriate percentage reduction in carbon emissions from purchased goods, services, and works compared to a baseline year from our key strategic suppliers.	This data provides the University visibility and transparency into its supply chains Green House Gas (GHG) emissions. This requires us to work closely with our suppliers and setting common goals.
Identify and collaborate with strategic suppliers, monitoring their carbon emission data and reduction plans.	Strategic supplier sample groups will help progression towards more accurate supplier emission data, rather than spend-based data.
Percentage of suppliers' payment processed within/before the agreed payment term compared with overall percentage of payment made.	This data is intended to give the University an overview of suppliers paid within the agreed-upon terms. It also demonstrates how the institution is ready to meet its obligations to the suppliers.

2. Alignment to the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

KPI / Objective	Description
Establish a mechanism to identify total cost savings achieved through responsible procurement practices.	This would provide an overview of the department's performance in line with meeting the savings targets set out by the University.
Percentage of tenders assessed for their environmental and community benefits.	This will highlight the extent environmental and social criteria has been considered throughout tendering.
Quantified level of ESG benefit provided through tenders directly to the University.	This will indicate the level of involvement the suppliers will have when engaging in an ESG incentive that is relevant to the University, using the ESG scorecard.
Case study assessing the ESG benefits achieved following implementation of the Responsible Procurement Policy.	This will highlight the impact this policy has had as well as a detailed assessment of the types of ESG benefits achieved.
Percentage of Cardiff University spend with SMEs.	In line with achieving the aim of having a more equal Wales, this metric shows the University's effort towards supporting local SMEs.

3. Increase awareness of and engagement with our responsibility agenda among our present and prospective supply chain.

KPI / Objective	Description
Number of procurement staff trained in responsible procurement practices.	This data gives the University an overview of the training rate and personnel development initiatives within the procurement department.
Adoption of the Supplier Code of Conduct with strategic and tendered suppliers.	The number of suppliers signed up to our code of conduct indicates uptake on responsible practices.

8. Reporting Our Performance

Achievement will be reported by the Director of Procurement through the Procurement Value Survey published by the **Higher Education Procurement Association (HEPA)** Report at the end of each fiscal year. The report will include:

- Annual spend.
- Annual savings.
- Annual statement detailing performance, achievement and how the University intend to further improve the delivery of ESG.

This policy will be periodically reviewed and updated to reflect changing priorities and new national policies or legal frameworks.

9. Continuous Improvement

The Procurement Team at Cardiff University recognises the challenges of implementing, delivering, and monitoring ESG performance and this policy is a starting point for the University to make more responsible purchasing decisions.

Cardiff University understands the complexities of supply chains due to the multi-tiered, multi-geographic and often at times requiring highly specialised items or sub-components that in turn rely on other parties for parts or services. As a result, we will continue to work in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to demonstrate awareness of relevant risk areas that impact our operations and ensure resilience measures are effectively managed.

We will align with leading standards and principles and continue to partner with institutions and sustainability working groups across Wales, the UK and beyond to ensure that we are in line with the best practices.

While we aim to partner with suppliers to deliver continual improvement in our ESG performance, we also anticipate that suppliers will work with us to respond to Cardiff University's insights and feedback as well as suggest changes to procedures and new technologies when appropriate.

Appendix 1: Related Policies and Additional Resources

Cardiff University. Our Quality Standards. Available at: <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/about/facts-and-figures/quality-marks>

Cardiff University. 2020. *The Way Forward 2018-2023*. Available at: <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/about/our-profile/strategy>

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United Nations. 2015. The 17 Goals. Available at: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

Welsh Government. 2021. Guidance on Wales Procurement Policy statement: How we expect public bodies to undertake procurement. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/procurement-policy-statement-html>

Welsh Government. 2021. Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: the essentials. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/well-being-future-generations-act-essentials-html>

WRAP Cymru. 2023. Working with the public sector in Wales. Available at: <https://wrapcymru.org.uk/sectors/working-with-public-sector-in-Wales>

Glossary of Terms

Audit - A systemic inspection of a process or procedure to assess compliance with requirements or regulations.

Carbon Emissions – Used as a shorthand to refer to greenhouse Gas emissions that are treated at the Tokyo Treaty. Carbon dioxide is the most common GHG, and other gases can be measured in relation to it. The lower the value, the better for the environment.

Carbon Reduction - an activity that reduces carbon emission compared to a baseline scenario.

Circular economy - Based on the principles of designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use and regenerating natural systems, Circular economy is an integral part of the UK Government's 2018 Waste Strategy which covers the whole life cycle of a product from manufacture using recycled and recovered materials where possible through its use and consumption (with minimum environmental impact and longevity of use) to maximum recovery of the materials and minimal waste disposal at end of life.

Climate change - The large-scale long-term shift in the planet's weather patterns or average temperature.

Code of Conduct - a set of rules outlining the norms, rules and responsibilities or proper practices of an individual party or an organization.

Decarbonisation - The reduction or removal of carbon dioxide from energy sources. Usually refers to the electricity sector and refers to reducing the carbon intensity of electricity generated emissions per kWh by increasing efficiency of supply or changing the generation fuel mix from fossil fuel to renewables and low carbon sources.

Decommission - The activities performed to take a product or service out of use and make it unavailable to customers.

Due diligence – Undertaking a thorough appraisal or conducting an evaluation to establish all the facts prior to entering into an agreement.

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles - ESG is a framework that helps to understand how an organization is managing risks and opportunities related to environmental, social, and governance criteria.

Environmental sustainability - Our responsibility to keep an ecological balance within Earths' natural environment.

External Stakeholders - People, groups or organisations who don't belong to an organisation but are nevertheless impacted by it or have an impact upon it.

ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems - ISO 14001:2015 specifies the requirements for an environmental management system that an organisation can use to enhance its environmental performance.

ISO 20400 Sustainable Procurement - ISO 20400:2017 provides guidance to organisations, independent of their activity or size, on integrating sustainability within

procurement. It is an alternative to the Flexible Framework and gives detailed guidance on embedding sustainability and social value (community benefits) within your procurement processes and strategy.

Key performance indicator (KPI) – Values that can be measured or monitored to assess levels of achievement.

Landfill – Landfill is a system of waste disposal in which the waste is buried between layers of earth which has the effect of building up low-lying land.

Life-cycle assessment (LCA) – A technique to assess the environmental impact of each step in a product's life from raw material extraction through to the use, repair, and maintenance of the product (also called a life-cycle analysis or a cradle-to-grave analysis).

Modern Slavery – Modern slavery is the exploitation of other people for personal or commercial gain. Forms of Modern Slavery include human trafficking, forced labour, debt bondage and bonded labour, descent-based slavery, slavery of children and forced and early marriage. In the UK, the Modern Slavery Act makes organisations within excess of £36 million turnover responsible for this type of abuse in any tier of their supply chain and they must produce an annual modern Slavery statement to identify the steps they are taking towards eradicating modern slavery in their supply chains.

Net zero – cutting greenhouse gas emissions as close to zero as possible. This involves any action that removes as much carbon in the atmosphere as is put into it.

Scope 3 – Emissions are all other indirect emission that occur in the value chain, including both upstream and downstream emissions e.g., emissions associated with the use of goods, services, or works sold or used by an organisation.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – The Sustainable Development Goals, also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

Supply chain – A network of individuals, organisations, technology, activities, and resources working together to make sure goods, services, or works reach the end user.

Responsible Procurement - Making sure that goods, services, and works procured achieve value for money on a life cycle cost basis and generate benefits not only for the organisation, but also for the society and the economy, whilst protecting the environment.

Waste - a material, substance, or by-product eliminated or discarded as no longer useful or required after the completion of a process. This could be as a result of manufacturing e.g., materials, chemicals, lubricants or water or packaging that is discarded once the product is opened and used.

Whole-life costing (WLC) - Whole life costing is an investment appraisal and management tool which assesses the total cost of an asset over its whole life. It takes account of the initial capital cost, as well as operational, maintenance, repair, upgrade, and eventual disposal costs (CIPFA.org).