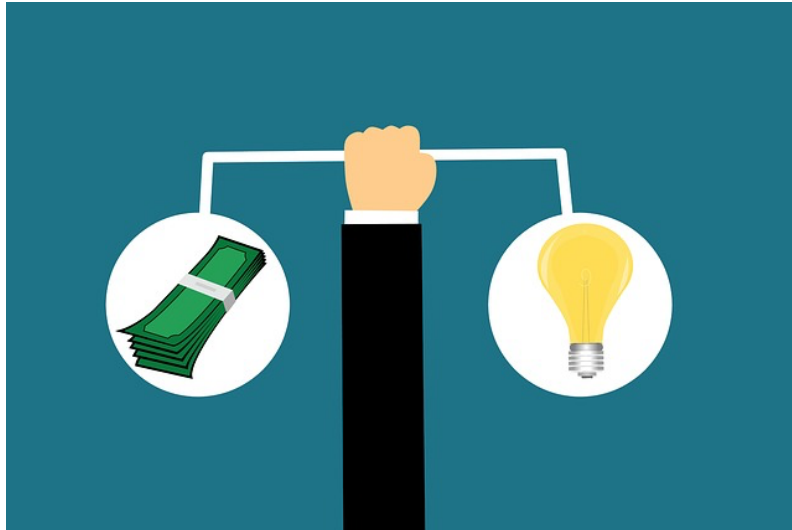


## Delivering Certainty in an Uncertain World

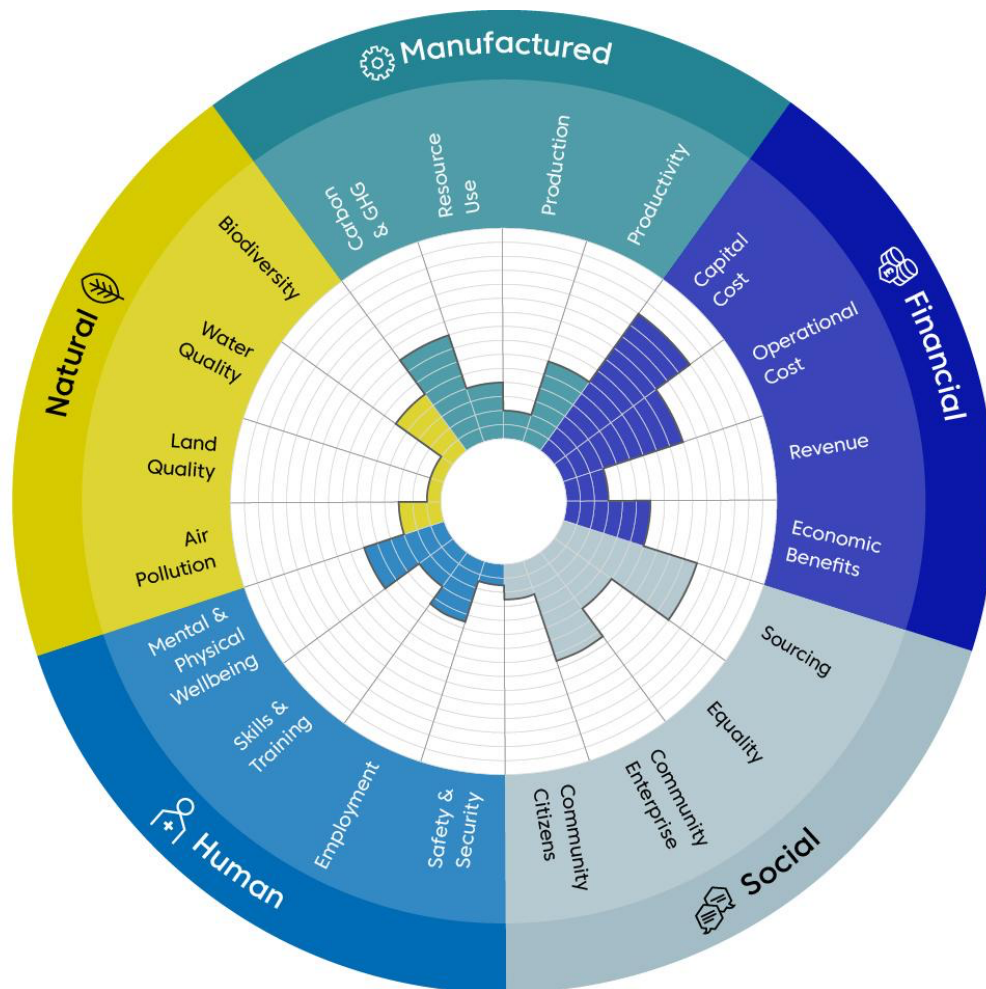


Oscar Wilde's definition of a cynic was someone "who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing" If we are to 'Build Back Better' after Covid, construction industry professionals and their clients need to suspend their cynicism and make more effort to understand value, and the certainty of outcomes that it brings.

Although we often blame the politicians and our clients for appearing to choose low cost options when it comes to construction projects, as an industry we find it near impossible to define and demonstrate whole life value. As design professionals we know instinctively that a well-designed building can improve outcomes for occupants, but we need to find ways of defining value, measuring it, and verifying its successful delivery.

What we do know for sure is that £65 billion is spent per annum on economic and social infrastructure including schools, hospitals, prisons, energy, and highways. It is surely time that we have a more holistic definition of value as opposed to how much a building costs. 'Cost' is often interchanged with the term 'value' in construction, but we all know that the two are really quite different. Swap the word 'value' for 'outcome' and we can clearly see the problem.

However, expectations around value are changing... and for the better. Big societal needs such as the drive to net zero, health and wellbeing and social impact are moving to the forefront and it's time to take this opportunity to build in value definition at the start of the construction cycle, before project formation, driving certainty of outcomes and helping to 'Build Back Better'.



Enter the Value toolkit developed by the Construction Innovation Hub comprising four modules that takes a project from the value definition phase to measuring value in delivery and operations throughout the lifetime of the project. See the link below for more detail.

[https://constructioninnovationhub.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/20200715\\_BR\\_09\\_ValueFrameworkReport\\_Digital\\_Pages.pdf](https://constructioninnovationhub.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/20200715_BR_09_ValueFrameworkReport_Digital_Pages.pdf)

As client advisers, we need to spend the time up front helping our clients define their values, enabling them to make rational choices along the way, based on their value needs. The drive to 'build, build, build' should not erode the opportunities this period offers, and to do so would be at our peril.

Defining values at the outset will provide more certainty for clients and what they can expect from their own projects, whilst addressing some of the wider needs of society such as the drive to net Zero. How we procure our buildings and measure the outcomes is the next thorny challenge.