



We take a look at the increased awareness of and activities around the environment, social value and governance and why these three terms are grouped together

In the design industry, the focus on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles has grown significantly in recent years. This is not merely a trend but a necessity, driven by various stakeholders in the built environment as a whole. From developers to architects, tenants to suppliers, there is a collective realisation of the imperative need to integrate sustainability into every facet of the industry.

At the heart of this movement lies the adoption of sustainable design principles. Like many architecture and design practices, here at Resonate, we have a deeply ingrained sense of responsibility towards the planet, are at the forefront of this transformation. To this end we are committed to working towards seven sustainable design principles: energy efficiency, water conservation, air quality, material choices, durability, design strategies and waste reduction. From site selection to material specification, sustainability should not be an afterthought but an integral part of the way the built environment operates.

Developers play a crucial role in the continued focus on ESG, demonstrating a deep-rooted, ingrained interest in sustainable development. A good deal of their building stock needs regenerating in order to save on the embodied carbon that would otherwise be incurred. Regulations regarding carbon emission are changing from a national level and also on a city by city basis. Because of this need for urban regeneration, developers are increasingly compelled to prioritise ESG considerations in their projects and are helping to shape a greener future for the built environment.

Moreover, tenants and occupiers are increasingly recognising the importance of ESG in their decision-making processes too. Take up varies from company to company with some prioritising sustainability as a fundamental aspect of their operations, while others are yet to fully embrace its significance. Nonetheless, a growing focus on ESG among tenants means the sustainable practices put in place during the design and construction of buildings is hopefully carried on throughout their occupation.

Of course the spectre of greenwashing among the discussions about sustainability is something to be aware of. It's imperative for the built environment to avoid token gestures and statements about sustainability and instead walk the walk by adopting a holistic approach to sustainability. That means looking at the other letters in the ESG acronym: social and governance.

At Resonate, through a highly detailed questionnaire we send out to our suppliers, we want to know not just about the products but also about them as a company: what they are doing to make an impact on the communities they operate in, whether their values align with ours. That is going to be much more prevalent going forward we believe.

At the moment, governance is not talked about as much but it's something we believe passionately in – it ties in with our idea of 'Work Family' and taking things like mindfulness and wellness seriously, only recently we celebrated National Walking Day as a team by exploring our local area in Southwest London.

While ESG is grouped together as an umbrella term, they are separate things in a way. We're interested to see where the industry goes in terms of all three.