



1.1.1 — Written Purpose, Mission & Values

Why you are doing this

If you are new to ESG, it is easy to think you need to start with policies, targets, or reporting. In reality, the first step is much more basic. You need a clear written statement of what your organisation is here to do, how it goes about doing it, and what behaviours it expects. This becomes the reference point for everything that follows.

At Tier 1, you are not trying to sound impressive. You are trying to be clear, truthful, and usable. A well-written draft makes Tier 2 straightforward because you will be improving something that already reflects reality, rather than inventing it later under pressure.

Think of this as writing down what you already know, but have never formally documented.

What “good enough” looks like at Tier 1

Your Tier 1 PMV should be:

- **Short and readable** (usually 1 page, sometimes 2 at most),
- **Written in plain English** that a new starter or a customer could understand,
- **Honest about how you operate today**, not how you want to operate in five years,
- **Free of promises you cannot evidence yet**,
- **Saved as a draft version** (for example, “Purpose, Mission and Values v0.1”).

If you can read it back and say, “Yes, that sounds like us”, then you have achieved the Tier 1 objective.

Before you start: set yourself up properly

This step is easier if you spend ten minutes getting the right information in front of you. You are not doing research. You are simply reminding yourself what is true.

Have to hand:

- Your website “About” page or any old brochure content, if you have it,
- A short list of your main services or products,
- Any internal notes on how you work (even basic process notes),
- If you employ people, your most basic expectations of behaviour (even if informal),

If you do not have any of this, that is fine. You can still complete the step.

How to write the draft (step by step)

Step 1: Write your Purpose

Why do we exist, beyond making money?

Purpose is the simplest to overthink. Do not aim for poetry. Aim for a clear explanation.

A practical way to get unstuck is to answer this sentence in ordinary language:

“We exist to help [who] by [what] so that [the outcome].”

To help you find the right words, consider these prompts:

- Who relies on you, or benefits when you do your job properly?
- What problem do you solve that would still exist without you?
- What is the positive outcome you help create?

If you are a commercial organisation, it is fine to acknowledge commercial reality, but do not make it the headline. “To make profit” is true, but it does not guide decisions. Purpose should point to the value you create.



Examples of acceptable Tier 1 purposes

- “We exist to provide dependable services that help our clients operate safe and compliant buildings.”
- “We exist to help customers access reliable products, delivered consistently and responsibly.”
- “We exist to support organisations with practical expertise so they can make better decisions and reduce risk.”

Be careful of these common traps

- Being too vague: “We exist to deliver excellence.”
- Sounding like everyone else: “We deliver innovative solutions.”
- Over-claiming impact: “We transform society” (unless this is genuinely true and demonstrable)

Tick-box check

- One short paragraph (not a slogan),
- Clear about who you serve and the need you meet,
- Understandable to someone outside the business.

Step 2: Write your Mission

What do we do, and how do we do it?

Mission is where you describe the reality of your work. Imagine you are explaining to a new employee what the organisation actually does and how it expects work to be delivered.

A helpful structure is:

“We deliver [what] for [who] by [how], with a focus on [what matters most].”

Prompts to trigger your thinking:

- What are your core services or products, in plain terms?
- How do you deliver them in practice? For example, through trained people, clear processes, quality control, fast response, safety, compliance, customer service.
- What do you take seriously in your delivery that you would not compromise on?

Examples of acceptable Tier 1 missions

- “Our mission is to deliver consistent, high-quality services through capable people, clear processes, and a strong focus on safety and compliance.”
- “Our mission is to provide reliable products and responsive service, while building long-term trust with customers through honesty and accountability.”

Be careful of these common traps

- Turning the mission into a strategy document with lots of goals,
- Making claims you cannot evidence: “We always deliver the best results”,
- Packing in buzzwords that your team would not use in real life.

Tick-box check

- Describes what you do day to day,
- Explains how you deliver it, at a high level,
- Feels recognisable to your team as “how we operate”.



Step 3: Choose and define your Values

How do we expect people to behave?

Values matter most when decisions are hard or when someone is under pressure. At Tier 1, you are not trying to cover every possible situation. You are choosing a small number of values that describe the behaviours you want to see consistently.

Choose three to five values. Fewer is better, because people can remember them.

The crucial part is this: every value needs a plain-English definition. If it cannot be explained in one sentence, it is probably too vague.

A simple method that works well is:

1. Pick the word (for example, "Integrity").
2. Add a behavioural explanation (for example, "We do what we say we will do and we do not cut corners.").

Examples of values written at the right level

- Integrity: We act honestly, keep our commitments, and do not cut corners,
- Respect: We treat colleagues, clients, and suppliers fairly and professionally,
- Responsibility: We take ownership of our work and consider the impact of our decisions,
- Quality: We work to clear standards and fix issues properly rather than rushing solutions,
- Continuous improvement: We learn from mistakes and make practical changes over time.

Be careful of these common traps

- Copying a generic set of values from another organisation,
- Listing values without explaining what they mean in practice,
- Choosing too many values (people will not use them).

Tick-box check

- Three to five values only,
- Each value includes a one-sentence behavioural definition,
- A new starter could understand what "good behaviour" looks like from this list.

A simple worked example (so you can model the format)

Purpose

"We exist to provide reliable and compliant services that help our clients operate safe, functional, and well managed buildings. When we do our job properly, our clients experience fewer disruptions, lower operational risk, and greater confidence in day-to-day performance."

Mission

"Our mission is to deliver consistent service through trained people, clear processes, and a strong focus on safety, compliance, and accountability. We aim to communicate clearly, respond promptly to issues, and improve over time through feedback and learning."

Values

Integrity: We do what we say we will do and we are honest when something has gone wrong.

Respect: We treat colleagues, clients, and suppliers fairly, professionally, and with consideration.

Responsibility: We take ownership of our work and think about the wider impact of our decisions.

Continuous improvement: We learn from mistakes, accept feedback, and make practical changes.

This is not "perfect". It is clear, plausible, and usable. That is exactly what Tier 1 needs.



Finalise the Tier 1 draft properly (so it is usable later)

Once written:

- Save it in your shared drive as “Purpose, Mission and Values v1”,
- Keep it in a location you can find again easily (for example, an ESG or Governance folder),
- Share it with leadership for awareness and light feedback, but do not start a long approval process yet,

Tick-box check

- Saved in a shared location,
- Version number added (v0.1),
- Shared internally for awareness.

What to be careful of overall

At Tier 1, the biggest risk is accidentally writing something that creates future exposure.

Avoid:

- Promises that sound like guarantees,
- Claims you cannot evidence,
- Big societal or environmental claims unless genuinely true and provable,
- Highly polished language that does not match reality.

If you keep the tone honest and practical, you will be in an excellent position for Tier 2 refinement.

What Comes Next

By completing your first written Purpose, Mission and Values statement, you have created a reference point that will quietly support every future ESG decision you make. This document is not something that sits on a shelf. It becomes the lens through which your organisation explains why ESG matters to you specifically, rather than as a generic obligation.

In the next stage of ESG maturity, you will begin to introduce basic governance structure, policies, and awareness activities. When that happens, this document will be used to explain why those actions are being taken. For example, when you introduce a code of conduct, data protection controls, or supplier standards, they should reflect the behaviours and responsibilities you have already described here. This prevents ESG from feeling like an imposed compliance exercise and helps people understand how it connects to the organisation they already recognise.

As you move into Tier 2, your Purpose, Mission and Values will also be referenced when defining roles and responsibilities. Decisions about who owns ESG oversight, how risks are escalated, and how issues are addressed become easier when there is already agreement about what the organisation stands for and how it expects people to behave. Without this foundation, governance often becomes fragmented or overly reactive.

This document will also support internal communication and training. When staff are introduced to ESG concepts, they will be framed in familiar language that reflects how the organisation already operates. This reduces resistance and confusion, particularly for people who may be sceptical of ESG or unsure how it applies to their role.

Later, as your ESG maturity develops further, this statement provides evidence of intent and continuity. Clients, partners, and auditors do not expect perfection at an early stage, but they do expect to see a clear line of development. Having a dated, version-controlled Purpose, Mission and Values statement shows that your ESG approach is being built deliberately rather than retrofitted under pressure.

Finally, this document gives you something to test future decisions against. When new risks, opportunities, or ESG requirements emerge, you can ask a simple question: does this align with why we exist, how we operate, and how we expect people to behave? That clarity is what allows ESG to remain practical, proportionate, and credible as your organisation grows in maturity.