

Woodland Carbon Code executive board minutes

Tuesday 17 June 2025 via Microsoft Teams

Present: Pat Snowdon, Vicky West, Andy Baker, Susan Szymborski-Welsh (Scottish Forestry), Fiona Hay (Welsh Government), Mark Broadmeadow (Forestry Commission), Ben Searle (Northern Ireland Forest Service)

Apologies: Jamie Smith (Scottish Forestry)

Outstanding actions

Pat provided an update on outstanding actions:

- We have added the Woodland Water Code and remote sensing to the agenda for the next Nature Markets Strategy Board.
- Vicky contacted Ecosystem Marketplace who confirmed it's not currently possible to split carbon prices by vintage, but could be possible in future.

Action 1: The Woodland Carbon Code secretariat to circulate the draft applications before submission.

Update: Ongoing. The draft submissions will be finalised soon.

Action 2: Andy to prepare a paper on compensatory planting for a future meeting.

Update: Ongoing.

1. Updates

Vicky provided updates on a number of developments.

Website

The Woodland Carbon Code team will be launching a refreshed version of the Woodland Carbon Code website on Thursday 19 June. It provides enhanced design, accessibility and security.

UK Land Carbon Registry platform update

S&P Global will be updating the current UK Land Carbon Registry platform at the end of July. The updated system will be easier to use and provide enhanced functionality.

UK Land Carbon Registry retender

The project group has reviewed all of the bids and hopes to select a final bidder soon.

2. Validation and verification bodies

Discussions are ongoing with the company which is interested in becoming a validation and verification body for Woodland Carbon Code projects. Existing validation and verification bodies have now been informed. Members of the board were happy to approve the development.

The Woodland Carbon Code team has been working with Organic Farmers & Growers to address an influx of projects going through validation and verification. The board agreed it is important to continue to monitor this situation.

3. Version 3 consultation

Vicky provided a summary of feedback from the version 3 consultation. There were 34 responses. Respondents were generally supportive of the proposed changes and provided some helpful suggestions for improvement.

The board agreed to move the launch of the new version to 1 August to ensure the team has enough time to incorporate suggestions and go through the UKAS review process.

This will mean that people can begin using version 3 from 1 August 2025. Projects already in development can continue to submit for validation or verification using Version 2.2 until 30 June 2026, giving an 11-month transition period.

Members discussed the proposals on increasing the size of projects which are eligible to use the small woods process. Mark asked about details around how Pending Issuance Units will be treated. Vicky confirmed that reducing the carbon prediction would result in marking any 'excess' Pending Issuance Units as 'not delivered'.

Members also discussed the proposal to make completed cashflows publicly available. Ben and Fiona explained that woodland grant information is not currently publicly available in Wales and Northern Ireland.

Action 3: Andy and members of the board to discuss making the cashflows publicly available with grant teams in each of the UK's forestry bodies.

4. Any other business

Investment mechanism for Pending Issuance Units

Members discussed a proposal for supporting more investment in Pending Issuance Units.

Action 4: The group to continue to discuss the proposal for supporting more investment in Pending Issuance Units by correspondence.

Additionality for public sector bodies

Andy updated the board on work to assess financial additionality for public sector organisations that cannot apply for grant support. He discussed a proposal for a grant-scheme 'proxy' which will help public sector bodies complete the cashflow document. The board agreed the proposal.