Woodland Carbon Code executive board minutes

Wednesday 9 October 2026 via Microsoft Teams

Present: Pat Snowdon, Vicky West, Jamie Smith, Pippa Lewis (Scottish Forestry), Hannah Gruffudd (Forest Research), Fiona Hay (Welsh Government), Mark Broadmeadow (Forestry Commission), Breandan Mulholland (DAERA).

1. Outstanding actions

Pat provided an update on outstanding actions:

Action 1: Vicky to add units which are being held in inactive accounts as an agenda item for the next executive board meeting.
Update: In progress, will continue as an action.

Action 2: Vicky to arrange a meeting with Howdens on insuring units, copying in Mark.
Update: In progress, will continue as an action.

Action 3: Pat to identify an interim chair for the Disputes Panel until a permanent chair is appointed.
Update: In progress, will continue as an action.

Action 4: Pat to discuss with S&P Global, and experts as appropriate, how applications for trading accounts should be handled in future.
Update: In progress, will continue as an action.

Action 5: Compensatory planting to be added to the agenda for the next Advisory Board meeting.
Update: In progress.

2. Conflicts of interest

No members declared a conflict of interest.

3. New Biomass models

Hannah Gruffudd gave a presentation on the new single-tree biomass models that FR are developing.

New models were needed as the previous models were based on limited data and contained inconsistencies. The new models take account of more data from EU sources and terrestrial laser scanning.

The new biomass models extrapolate beyond the available data and constrain branch biomass as a proportion of stem biomass. There are some differences

between the new and current biomass models for above and below ground (root) biomass, mainly for older growth.

The model needs to undergo some final testing, before the results will be published in a scientific paper and used to create an update to the carbon lookup tables.

The board discussed the possibility of obtaining data from mixed species/ age stands to help build the stand-scale model.

General updates

Statistics

Vicky provided data on units issued and sold over the last 13 years.

Key takeaways:

- There's a trend towards buyers with accounts rather than buyers who have units assigned to them.
- The number of PIUs being issued are increasing. A smaller proportion of issued units are sold in recent years as some project developers choose to hold onto their units.

Staffing

There have been a number of changes to the code team in recent months:

- Andrew Baker (Senior Ops Manager) is being replaced by John O'Hara in October.
- Natalie Meiklejohn (Coordinator) has left the team in September and a recruitment process is underway.
- Sarah Wann (WCC Communications Officer) started in September replacing Susan.

4. Rethink Carbon platform funding options

Pat explained the purpose and benefits of Rethink for the code and provided some funding options for the future operation of the platform.

A final decision on the Rethink platform will also require agreement from other executive bodies in the forestry authorities. At this stage, the board supported proposals for:

- a pilot phase to 31 March 2027, subject to funding;
- development of plans for a trial implementation period of 2-3 years; and,
- testing of a funding model during the pilot phase with a combination of user fee types.

The board confirmed that mandatory use of the platform by users is attractive but that more discussion is required on this point.

5. Validation and Verification bodies

The board discussed an application from a new validation and verification body, Natural Capital Certification.

The board supported the proposal for Natural Capital Certification to become a validation/verification body, subject to meeting appropriate rules (e.g. on conflicts of interest). The code team will follow the procedure for new validation and verification bodies.

6. Not Delivered Units

Vicky discussed the number and type of units which are marked 'not delivered' in the UK Land Carbon Registry, and the process for handling units which are sold, but marked 'not delivered', and how buyers are compensated.

The board agreed that project developers should be given a deadline, setting out sanctions where this is not met, and that clearer guidance should be provided for future cases.

Action 7: Vicky to contact the project developers and review and update guidance.

7. Carbon Price Data

Carbon price data has been collected by Ecosystem Marketplace to date. A smaller proportion of project developers reported their sales last year.

The board agreed that the code should collect 2026 data the same way as previously but should start the process earlier and take more time to engage participants.

Vicky proposed alternative data collection methods from 2027, potentially through the registry or a new external contract.

Action 8. Vicky to consult with project developers and propose new data collection methods to the Executive Board.

8. AOB

The board discussed membership and function of the advisory board.