



# A Guide to Woodland Carbon for Business



**Contents:**

1. Investing in Woodland Carbon: an overview
2. Why Woodland Carbon?
3. How much does it cost?
4. Woodland Carbon Code
5. Woodland Carbon compliance
6. The wider carbon market



## Investing in Woodland Carbon with the Woodland Trust

### **The Problem**

Through our continual release of greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere our planet is warming up and we're experiencing more extreme weather events with effects on the seasons, wildlife and food production.

Yet trees are nature's most effective tool in helping to cool down our planet. They naturally absorb and remove harmful carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from the atmosphere helping to cleanse and purify the air.

And that's one of the reasons why the Woodland Trust encourages individuals and businesses to help us plant more trees and create new woodland, but to do it right here in the UK.

Through our Woodland Carbon scheme you can reduce your company carbon footprint by locking up your carbon emissions through trees.

By turning your carbon into woodland you'll be doing your bit for the environment and, at the same time, helping us create thriving new pockets of woodland to benefit wildlife and people alike.

### **Our solution**

Carbon management and complying with legal offset requirements abroad have become business as usual. But, a growing number of companies now want to invest in carbon in the UK as it is more meaningful to customers and stakeholders.

Woodland Carbon, the Woodland Trust's carbon removal scheme, offers a unique opportunity for companies to invest in local carbon projects in the UK that bring many environmental and social benefits, and in doing so access a compelling marketing message. The Woodland Carbon label can be used on products and marketing materials.

### **Tangible business benefits**

- Carbon removal through tree planting in the UK - a marketing message showing your commitment to UK customers' local environment
- New woodland creation to make new spaces for wildlife and communities and make the UK landscape more resilient to climate change impacts
- Access to the UK's leading experts in woodland and trees

We can work with you to remove any amount of emitted carbon, from 20 tonnes to thousands of tonnes. We offer a straightforward process and can tailor programmes to your needs, including tree planting events. For example, you might wish to attach a Woodland Trust branded carbon message to a particular product line, or get your staff engaged in the process by planting trees at one of our sites.



## Why Woodland Carbon?

1. Growing trees capture and store atmospheric carbon. One quarter of a living tree's weight is carbon: this remains locked safely away until the tree is either burned or decomposes.
2. The UK is one of the least wooded countries in Europe, with tree cover of just 13% against a Eurozone average of 44%.
3. The UK Government has acknowledged the role that trees and woods play in addressing climate change. [The Read Report](#), published in November 2009, explicitly states the cost effectiveness of carbon sequestration by trees and provides a scenario by which the UK can lock away some 10% of its annual emissions by 2060 through the planting of 23,000 hectares annually.
4. UK woodland, especially native species, provides a wide range of "ecosystem services" such as the control and condition of water supplies, mitigation of surface water flooding, provision of shade, shelter and control of pollution. As an endless source of renewable fuel, woodland plays a far greater role in the move to a low carbon economy than simple carbon sequestration by trees.
5. Woodland soils are among the most carbon rich found. Transitioning land from agriculture or marginal use into woodland brings about a steady and indefinite period of carbon accumulation, irrespective of what the trees themselves are doing. In time, the soil will contain several times the amount of carbon as is found in the woody biomass.
6. The requirements for a quality carbon offset are additionality, permanence, and verifiability. Woodland Carbon finances woodland creation that would not otherwise have happened.
7. The UK Government's first ever carbon certification scheme, the Woodland Carbon Code launched in July 2011, and the Woodland Trust was instrumental in developing this as part of a group of industry stakeholders led by the Forestry Commission. The Woodland Carbon Code uses a toolkit to determine expected rates of carbon sequestration. These values take account of the management regime, species mix, and local climate change impacts over the coming century, and are intended to provide a parameter range within which the subsequent independent ground truthing operates.
8. The Woodland Trust has instructed PricewaterhouseCoopers to conduct a Systems and Processes audit of its Woodland Carbon scheme to ensure transparency. Together with conformance with the Woodland Carbon Code, which requires projects be lodged in a publicly accessible database, we are confident that Woodland Carbon provides a high level of confidence to investors.



## How much does it cost?

The cost per tonne of Woodland Carbon depends on several factors including where the trees are to be planted, scale, and whether or not you wish to have additional benefits such as customer or staff engagement.

For instance, if you wish to simply mitigate over 2,000 tonnes of your UK carbon in the UK, the cost per tonne can be as little as £10 per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>. If you would like to invest a smaller amount, or would like public access and people engagement opportunities, this may rise to £15 per tonne.

### **Calculating your carbon footprint**

If you need to calculate your company carbon footprint, our official partner Delta Simons can undertake this work for you. We can then assess the cost of removing your carbon based on your emissions and other above factors.

Please contact us to discuss this option.



## The Woodland Carbon Code

The Government approved the first ever UK carbon certification scheme in July 2011 to give investors maximum confidence and to enable businesses to communicate UK woodland creation projects in their green house gas reports.

The Woodland Carbon Code has been developed by an industry stakeholder group led by the Forestry Commission.

The initiative aims to provide transparency and credibility to UK woodland projects designed to capture and store carbon.

The code provides a best practice guide for organisations wishing to create woodland to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. This gives businesses a unique opportunity to mitigate their carbon emissions through tree planting in the UK. Woodland carbon projects also bring many additional benefits to the local environment, people and wildlife.

The Woodland Trust has been instrumental in the Code's creation. Both companies and individuals can invest in our Woodland Carbon scheme. Companies can remove their carbon through planting at a number of key sites in the UK including the Warcop site in Cumbria and Heartwood Forest in Hertfordshire.

The Woodland Trust's Carbon Leader, Dr Nick Atkinson, led the Woodland Trust's work with the Forestry Commission to create the Code. He said: "The Woodland Carbon Code puts woodland creation on the map as part of the UK's response to climate change. Businesses and individuals looking to voluntarily support tree planting can have confidence in the claims made around carbon removal, whilst at the same time demonstrating their environmental commitment."



## Woodland Carbon compliance

The Woodland Carbon Code provides reassurance to our customers, consultants, brokers and investors. Administered by the Forestry Commission and developed by them in conjunction with DEFRA and the Woodland Trust, this voluntary code encourages a consistent approach to woodland carbon projects, and offers clarity and transparency to customers about the carbon savings that their contributions may realistically achieve.

Compliance with the code means that Woodland Carbon projects:

- Are responsibly and sustainably managed to national forestry standards
- Use a consistent methodology for estimating of the amount of carbon that will be sequestered or locked up as a result of the tree planting
- Must be publicly registered and independently verified
- Meet transparent criteria and standards to ensure that real, additional carbon benefits are delivered.

### **The Code works for everyone involved:**

- Customers have reassurance that they have invested in a responsible scheme and can see the benefits that will be provided.
- Projects have recognised procedures and standards to work to, and can use their verified status as an attractive selling point for potential customers.
- Woodland managers have clearly set out standards of forest management to follow.

Further details about the Woodland Carbon Code can be found at [www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)



## The wider Carbon Market

As awareness of climate change has grown so the need to reduce emissions of the greenhouse gases which have caused it, of which CO<sub>2</sub> is the most dominant, has also been recognised. This has led in turn to the adoption, following the third Conference of Parties summit in Kyoto (the "Kyoto Protocol"), of legislative measures that both force companies to reduce emissions and also to "offset" those emissions which unavoidably remain. The carbon trading market has developed as a consequence.

The carbon market is complex but in its simplest terms divides into two sectors:

- 1) The Compliance Market
- 2) The Voluntary Sector

### **The Compliance Market**

In order to be considered an "offset" in the compliance market, projects are limited to those taking place in developing countries in line with the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism.

This instrument was designed to see the industrialised world finance low emissions development in poorer nations; the resulting carbon credits are traded in carbon markets such as the European Trading System (ETS).

The overwhelming majority of traded carbon is of the "avoided emissions" variety: examples include wind and solar farms, hydro-electric power and other low emissions solutions.

### **The Voluntary Sector**

The Voluntary Sector can include projects in developed countries, such as those in our Woodland Carbon scheme. These projects are often of a higher quality, bringing additional benefits over and above the carbon savings. This can include social, environmental and biodiversity benefits.

The Woodland Trust's Woodland Carbon is a voluntary scheme. Our environment is enriched by creating new native woodland in the UK, people have more green space in which to relax and enjoy life, wildlife benefits from new habitat, and the landscape itself becomes more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

In addition to these benefits, carbon is being removed locally. It's true it takes longer to remove a tonne of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere in the UK than, say, in the Tropics, but the wider benefits are only locally delivered. No amount of Amazon rainforest is ever going to provide habitat for our wildlife!



## Contact us

### Corporate Partnerships

T: 01476 581112

E: [corporatepartnerships@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto:corporatepartnerships@woodlandtrust.org.uk)

### Further information

Woodland Carbon Code – visit: [www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode)

