

Real-life risk reduction

As Module D is seemingly left out of a landmark new homes benchmarking report, Nigel Headford, Chief Executive at the Council for Aluminium in Building, explains why ‘whole life should mean whole life’ when it comes to Whole Life Carbon calculations.

The launch of the *Future Homes Hub (FHH) Whole Life Carbon (WLC) Benchmarking Report* is a welcome first step towards providing developers with the real-life data to both understand and reduce carbon in new homes.

Building a shared dataset of WLC assessments to measure the current performance of new homes more accurately, the FHH report references established frameworks such as EN 15978 and the RICS whole life carbon assessment (WLCA) for the Built Environment (2nd Edition).

Module D matters

The RICS guidance states that ‘...a full [WLC] assessment will also include Module D,’ which concerns the carbon impacts and savings that occur after a building’s life ends, when materials are reused, recycled, or recovered.

It goes further in Section 3.1, confirming: ‘For new-build assets, either buildings or infrastructure assets/civil engineering works, all life cycle stages must be assessed, including Module D.’

Despite these clear endorsements of the need for its inclusion, Annex C of the FHH WLC benchmarking report indicates that Module D has, instead, been ruled out.

Module D considers the possibility that the materials used in a building’s construction, such as aluminium or steel, can be recycled and used instead of virgin product in the future.

As circular economy principles gain traction in built environment policy, and as environmental product declarations (EPDs) to EN 15804+A2 now include Module D data as mandatory, excluding this stage means the long-term environmental value of durable, recyclable materials is overlooked.

Without Module D, there is no way to ensure that the new homes of today do not become the waste of tomorrow.

Risk of distortion

Materials designed for circularity may appear more carbon intensive if only upfront (A1–A5) and end-of-life processing (C1–C4) stages are assessed. The benefits of reuse and recycling are omitted, potentially impacting material choices and underestimating long-term performance.

While we recognise the pressure to balance technical accuracy with simplicity to encourage participation in schemes like the FHH WLC benchmarking report, at the end of the day, we need to get it right – and not lead people to underestimate the complexity of WLC.

As benchmarking becomes more influential, consistency across methodologies is essential. Aligning with EN 15978 and the RICS WLCA ensures both comparability and credibility.

The Council for Aluminium in Building (CAB) fully supports data-capture initiatives and considers the FHH’s benchmarking efforts so far to be a constructive starting point. But we urgently need clarification of the methodology to ensure reliability and reflect true whole-life impacts.

‘Life should mean life’ is a phrase often used in support of whole-life tariffs for the perpetrators of the most serious crimes, and when it comes to whole life carbon (WLC), the same sentiment applies. In this case, that means the inclusion of Module D. □



Nigel Headford

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For more information about CAB visit www.c-a-b.org.uk.
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Entering the scifi

The Council for Aluminium in Building (CAB) welcomed members to the National Space Centre in Leicester on 5th March for its Spring Forum 2026. It was a day of industry insight, discussion and networking. Ed Humphreys reports

Set against the backdrop of one of the UK's most iconic science and innovation venues, this year's forum combined forward-thinking content with valuable opportunities for members to connect and collaborate.

The afternoon business forum took place in the planetarium, where delegates explored one of the most talked-about topics currently shaping the business landscape: artificial intelligence.

Carly Grant of Thinkivity led a session examining the pros and cons of AI, focusing on how artificial intelligence could impact construction businesses in practical terms.

Her presentation prompted lively discussion among members, who shared perspectives on opportunity, risk and implementation within their own organisations.

Alongside the keynote session, members received updates from CAB covering ongoing technical, regulatory and sustainability workstreams.

With continued change across competency requirements, sustainability priorities and the wider regulatory landscape, the forum provided an important platform for members to stay informed and contribute to the conversation.

CAB chief executive Nigel Headford said the event reflected the association's commitment to delivering relevant, high-value forums for its membership.

"Our spring forum is about bringing members together to focus on the issues that matter most to their businesses," he said.

"AI is already influencing how companies operate, and it was invaluable to explore both its potential and its limitations in a practical, balanced way.

"At the same time, we continue to support members through significant regulatory and technical developments. Events like this ensure our community remains informed, connected and prepared for what lies ahead."



Following the business forum, delegates moved into the exhibition area for a drinks reception and formal dinner, with the National Space Centre providing a memorable setting for further networking.

Members also heard an after-dinner address from former Leicester City and

England goalkeeper Peter Shilton OBE, who shared reflections from his sporting career and insights on leadership, resilience and high performance.

The spring forum builds on a strong programme of CAB events over the past year, including the 2025 technical conference at Loughborough University and previous forums that have spotlighted sustainability, aluminium recycling and the Building Safety Act.

CAB's 2026 events programme will continue to focus on regulation, innovation and best practice across the aluminium in building sector.

Headford said: "The National Space Centre proved to be an inspiring venue for a forward-looking event. It was fantastic to see such strong engagement from members throughout the day, and we look forward to building on this momentum at future CAB events." □

For more information about the CAB events programme, visit www.c-a-b.org.uk/cab-events-programme email enquiries@c-a-b.org.uk, or call 01453 828851