



The 34th Meeting of the Department of Computer Science and Technology Buildings and Environment Committee

10.00-11.00, Friday, 13 June 2025
Room SC04

Minutes

Attendance:

Prof Richard Mortier, Chair
Sarah Bainsfair (Observer)
Celia Burns, Secretary
Tom Bytheway
Dr Andrew Caines
Diana Gauvrit

Dr Markus Kuhn
Dr Ian Lewis
Martin McDonnell
Daniel Porter
Malcolm Scott
Caroline Stewart

1. Welcome

The Committee welcomed new Building Services Manager, Diana Gauvrit, who started in post on 9 June 2025.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Piete Brooks.

3. Approval of the Minutes

The [minutes](#) of the meeting held on 12 May 2025 were approved.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Committee Membership

Richard will be taking sabbatical leave for the 2025/26 academic year, so this was his last meeting as a member of the Committee. Ian has agreed to take over as Chair after this meeting. The Committee thanked Richard for his contributions as Chair since October 2022 and welcomed Ian as the new Chair.

6. Reducing Energy Consumption

(a) LED upgrade

The Committee noted that this project is now complete. Richard had sent an email to building-users@cl.cam.ac.uk on 15 May 2025 addressing feedback about the project, to which there had been no further responses. Markus had announced the changes to the configurations made to the Lecture Theatres (his email of 4 June 2025 to cl-lecturers-discussion@lists.cam.ac.uk).

Diana reported that she had met with Roger Ling, Estates, to discuss what to do with the money left over from this project. As there was not enough money left to do another complete floor, Diana suggested replacing the emergency lighting on the first and second floors (hallways and toilets) so that the emergency lighting for the whole building was on the same circuit. The Committee agreed with this proposal and suggested looking into doing FW26 as well (which had been proposed at the last meeting). Also proposed at the last meeting were radio switches for some of the ground floor offices but Diana reported that all the required switches had already been purchased.

It was agreed that Diana would discuss the agreed proposals (for emergency lighting on the first and second floors plus the lighting in FW26) with Roger Ling, Estates.

Action: Diana

(b) Recording energy use and solar panel contributions

Diana reported that she is looking into getting additional accounts for Malcolm and Markus to access usage data.

Action: Diana

7. Building Matters

a) Department Café

Caffiend has indicated an interest in providing a cafeteria service for the Department. Diana reported that she has spoken to Kash (proprietor of Caffiend) and has requested guidance from the Finance Department before she starts the tendering process.

Action: Diana

b) Verex security system

A new security system is required to replace the current at-risk Verex system and there had been discussions between the Department, Estates and the UIS about the Department doing a pilot project. Richard reported that Daniel had collected updated quotes from the original proof of concept suppliers and that the Head of Department considers the project to be sufficiently urgent for the Department to allocate the money (£50-£100k).

The plan now is for the Department to take this forward, keeping UIS and Estates informed in terms of their responsibility for maintenance and software interaction, and with a view to this project being a pilot for other Departments. Diana will also be involved going forward, and we will continue to explore whether there are any non-Department funds available for the project.

Action: Daniel

c) Building management system (BMS; cooling and heating)

i) **Sludge in the system.** A side stream filter was installed on boiler circuit No. 1 to filter the system. The Committee discussed this issue and agreed that the next step would be to find out to what degree the filter is working. Martin reported that he would look into this.

Action: Martin

d) Re-fit of the WGB Library

The Library refit could qualify for funding available for supporting developing education spaces. Ian reported that he has collected the information from the original proposal and was looking forward to meeting with Diana soon to take this project forward.

Action: Diana and Ian

e) Downpipe Leaks

The leaks are a siphonic drainage issue. Diana reported that Millcam would be doing the repair next week (replacing three points in the ceiling which require repair and a fourth point as a precautionary measure). The works will require part of the second-floor hallway to be blocked off; Diana will send a building-wide message about this.

Action: Diana

Post-meeting note: Diana sent a building-wide message on 13 June.

f) Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)

Richard noted that the plan is to get a commercial tester to do a bulk test in the Department at regular intervals. Diana recommended the tests should be done not less than once every two years, noting that from a fire safety point of view, the testing is a very good thing to do. Thomas offered to be trained as a tester, not for the bulk testing but so that he could consult on an as-needed basis only. The Committee agreed, and Diana and Thomas agreed to discuss this offline.

Action: Diana and Thomas

g) The Hardware Lab—Relocation of the Workshop to the Bin Store

The Head of Department had asked whether there are other spaces on the West Cambridge site where we could collaborate on finding a site for a larger/separate workshop. Thomas reported that, despite following up on his initial requests for information from other West Cambridge departments, he still has not received many responses. He will follow up again and report back at the next meeting.

Action: Thomas

Since there doesn't seem to be much engagement from other departments, the Committee felt that it was important to go ahead with moving the bins out of the bin store.

Action: Diana and Martin

h) Pool Table

A new table has been ordered; delivery is expected sometime during the summer.

i) Meeting Pods

The replacement desks for the second lot of pods have now been installed. Ian reported that he plans to install CO₂ sensors on the underside of the desks.

Action: Ian

j) Use of the Garden on the South Side of the Building as a Quiet Place

Diana reported that she has discussed this issue with Estates. Her understanding was that we want to use the grass area on the south side of the building as a quiet place, but some members of the Department were concerned about noise and the space being used by other departments. Diana suggested closing off the far end of the area with a fence, closing off the front end with a fence and a gate, and making the gate accessible via card access (this latter point being required by Estates, who also made it clear that the Department should pay for this aspect).

It was agreed that the fence and card access would enforce the Department's control of the space, and the cost of the card access should be factored into the Verex security system issue (see item 7b above).

Action: Diana and Daniel

k) Chiller

Malcolm reported that the fault with the chiller is ongoing and is with Estates to resolve. The works have been delayed due to difficulties with scheduling and handing over from one maintenance company to another. Malcom will follow up with Estates since resolution of the problem will become increasingly urgent as the weather gets warmer.

Action: Malcolm

l) Bike Cage Gate

Diana reported that she had received several comments about the time the gate remains open as well as reports that the gate appears to get stuck in closed position and people are pressing the emergency button. The Committee discussed the issue. It seems that adjusting the time the gate remains open has caused system integration issues, so we need to talk to whoever is responsible for the gate (probably someone at the Ray Dolby building) in order to move forward on this issue. The Committee agreed that Diana would take this issue forward after getting some more information from Thomas, and Malcolm would reconfigure the door open time.

Action: Diana and Malcolm

***Post meeting note:** on 13 June 2025, Malcolm changed the configuration of the cycle compound locks in Verex to match our other locks (Verex sends an unlock signal for 5 seconds rather than 30). The gate now stays open for roughly 30 seconds.*

8. Out-of-Hours Use of Rooms on the Public Side of the Building

Internal events: Richard reported that he has finalised the policy documenting responsibilities of academic event hosts and sponsors for out-of-hours events. Celia will post the policy on the Departmental intranet.

Action: Celia

External events: Caroline noted that the Head of Department has asked the Committee to consider charging for the use of the building for external events, as do other departments. Caroline said she would ask Maths what they do in this respect.

Action: Caroline

9. Student Feedback

The Committee does not currently have a Student Rep. Daniel (member of the Postgraduate Student Forum (PSF)) reported that he had raised this issue at a recent PSF meeting. The PSF is going to circulate a call for a Student Rep.

10. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

(i) Lighting issues: Richard reported that he had not heard back from the Union Rep about HSE guidance on LED lighting for VDU users. There was a discussion about the brightness of the lighting in the ground floor corridors and the possibility of asking for further feedback about the lighting project now that a month has passed since its

completion. Diana said she would follow up with Estates about getting the lighting in the corridors reduced and the possibility of setting that lighting to dim rather than off.

11. Any Other Business

(i) Coffee machine in the Fishbowl kitchen

Diana reported that the coffee machine is broken, and she is reluctant to extend the lease which runs out at the end of the year. Diana proposed looking into whether the machine could be repaired for the rest of the year, request a credit for the time it wasn't working, and replace it with another equally priced machine next year. The Committee agreed with Diana's proposal.

Action: Diana

(ii) Request for UV filtering

Diana reported that she had received a request from a participant of a one-day event on 19 August for UV filters in the lights in the Lecture Theatres and Intel Lab. The Committee discussed this request and agreed that this would not be practical, but we would be open to other suggestions for what might be helpful. Diana said she would get back to the participant to explain why this would not be possible and to suggest that they look at other potential options.

Action: Diana

(iii) Supreme Court ruling on the definition of woman

Thomas asked whether there were any updates from the Department about this issue. Caroline reported that Professor Robert Watson, Chair of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, who is spending a lot of time on this issue, had written to the Pro Vice-Chancellor, expressing the Department's concerns and the difficulties we are facing. Professor Watson had received a short response, referring him to a meeting with the Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) and Estates Division. Professor Watson will be meeting with the Head of ED&I, but Estates Division are waiting on instruction from the University once the EHRC consultation is concluded.

This is taking some time, but the Department aims to create some self-contained universal toilets to be accessible to all.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for 14.00 – 15.00 on Thursday, 16 October 2025. Dates for subsequent meetings will be scheduled then.