



**The 38th Meeting of the Department of Computer Science and Technology
Buildings and Environment Committee**

**14.00 – 15.00, Thursday, 14 May 2026
Room SC04**

Agenda

Committee Membership:

Dr Ian Lewis, Chair

Sarah Bainsfair (Observer)

Dr Piete Brooks

Celia Burns, Secretary

Thomas Bytheway

Professor Andrew Caines

Diana Gauvrit

Dr Tobias Grosser

Dr Markus Kuhn

Martin McDonnell

Daniel Porter

Malcolm Scott

Caroline Stewart

Jane Webster

A note on the new agenda structure

To support continuity and make best use of meeting time, background on items that recur across multiple Buildings and Environment Committee meetings is now set out in Appendix A — Standing Background. The agenda itself focuses on updates, decisions, and actions required at this meeting.

★ Items marked with an asterisk are standing items and will be discussed only if there is a substantive update.

1. Conflicts of Interest

Members are invited to declare any conflicts of interest relating to agenda items.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies have been received from Diana.

3. Approval of the Minutes

For approval: [minutes](#) of the meeting held on 26 March 2026.

4. Reducing Energy Consumption

a) LED upgrade: leftover funds ★

No update.

Last noted position: LED upgrade complete; use of remaining funds paused pending Estates position.

Background: See Appendix A, Item A1.

b) Recording energy use and solar panel contributions ★

No update.

Last noted position: Access to energy-use data arranged; follow-up work ongoing.

Background: See Appendix A, Item A1.

5. Building Matters

a) Verex security system ★

No update.

Last noted position: Replacement required; progress dependent on Estates/UIS coordination.

Background: Appendix A, Item A2.

b) Building management system (cooling and heating)

Cooling★

No update.

Last noted position: Monitoring ongoing; escalation if further trips occur.

Background: Appendix A, Item A3.

Heating

Flushing of pipes: Update: Caroline

Office temperatures: Decision required re. labelling and communications

Background: Appendix A, Item A3.

c) Re-fit of the WGB Library

Update: Ian

Background: Appendix A, Item A4.

d) Downpipe Leaks and Roof Repairs ★

No update.

Last noted position: Roof replacement planned.

Background: Appendix A, Item A5.

e) The Hardware Lab—Relocation of the Workshop ★

No update.

Last noted position: No viable relocation options currently available.

Background: Appendix A, Item A8

f) Use of the South Garden as a Quiet Place

Update: Ian

Background: Appendix A, Item A7.

g) Automatic Doors ★

No update.

Last noted position: Proposal approved in October 2025; progress dependent on funding and Estates delivery.

h) Lack of discussion space on the second floor

Update: Tobias.

Last noted position: Initial changes implemented; further options under consideration.

i) Teaching wall surfaces ★

No update.

Last noted position: Pilot whiteboard installed in FW26; awaiting feedback before wider rollout.

j) Car parking ★

Information note: Cambridge West External Facilities Manager has confirmed that the barriers operate 24/7. Issues can be reported on 07824 835212; outside 7 am - 7 pm, Security can assist (see entrance signage).

k) Gender-neutral / universal toilets

Update: Caroline

Background: Appendix A, Item A8.

l) Minor refurbishments to the café area

Discussion: Andrew.

m) Catering provision

Update: Caroline (Finance Division enquiry)

6. Student Feedback

Jamie, Postgraduate Student Rep, to report.

7. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I)

Any other ED&I matters not covered elsewhere.

8. Any Other Business

9. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 25 June 2026, 14.00 – 15.00 (hybrid, SC04).

**See overleaf for Appendix A – Standing Background for
Ongoing Buildings and Environment Committee (BEC) Items**

Appendix A – Standing Background for Ongoing Buildings and Environment Committee (BEC) Items

(For information only — not for routine discussion
unless explicitly referenced in the agenda)

This appendix summarises the background, prior consideration, and agreed approach for matters that recur across multiple BEC meetings. Members are invited to refer to this document for context.

Discussion at meetings should focus on new updates, decisions, or escalations identified in the main agenda.

A1. Reducing Energy Consumption: LED Upgrade and Energy Monitoring

Summary

Department-wide LED lighting upgrade completed; ongoing work relates to use of leftover funds and improved monitoring of energy and solar panel usage.

History and prior consideration

- LED upgrade discussed extensively during 2024–25 following user complaints.
- Estates paused further works pending surveys and engagement with student and staff concerns.

Key points previously agreed

- Emergency lighting on upper floors and FW26 identified as possible priorities, subject to Estates agreement.
- Energy monitoring data would support reporting, funding bids, and sustainability work.

Current status

- LED upgrade itself is complete.
- Access to energy usage data has been arranged; follow-up work ongoing.
- Items generally starred unless there is a substantive update.

Where it appears now

Agenda Item 4 (Reducing Energy Consumption).

A2. Verex Security System (Card Access)

Summary

Replacement of the obsolete Verex card-access system, which poses operational and security risks.

History and prior consideration

- Ongoing discussions for several years involving the Department, Estates, and UIS.
- Department considered a potential pilot site for a new system.

Key points previously agreed

- Existing system is no longer fit for purpose.
- Replacement requires coordination with UIS and Estates.

- Costs likely significant; Department preference is not to fund alone where possible.

Actions already undertaken

- Engagement with UIS and Estates representatives.
- Exploration of separating intruder alarm and card-access elements.
- Updated quotations expected.

Current status

Standing item; updates reported only when progress occurs.

Where it appears now

Agenda Item 5(a).

A3. Building Management System (Cooling and Heating)

Summary

Persistent heating and cooling problems linked to system condition, maintenance issues, and ageing infrastructure.

History and prior consideration

- Recurrent issues including sludge, blocked coils, inconsistent heating, and chiller failures.
- Multiple contractor inspections, flushing exercises, and partial mitigations.
- Whether problems relate to maintenance/system condition or building design.

Key points previously agreed

- Evidence should be collated to support escalation with Estates.
- Replacement or upgrade likely required in the medium term, but interim mitigations still necessary.

Current status

Ongoing; item remains live due to operational impact on staff and students.

Where it appears now

Agenda Item 5(b).

A4. WGB Library – Re-fit and Future Use

Summary

Consideration of future use of the WGB Library space, including teaching, research, and alternative uses.

History and prior consideration

- Originally proposed as a teaching space.
- Subsequent discussion explored social, researcher, PhD seating, and workshop-related uses.
- Estates funding availability has changed.

Key points previously agreed

- Need to clarify future teaching requirements before progressing design.

- Any refit should take account of flooring, noise, and space pressures elsewhere.
- Library carpet tiles may be reused elsewhere in the building.

Current status

Still in exploratory phase; awaiting clarity on teaching need and viable proposals.

Where it appears now

Agenda Item 5(c).

A5. Downpipe Leaks and Roof Repairs

Summary

Ongoing roof integrity issues, now moving towards a planned roof replacement.

History and prior consideration

- Siphonic drainage issues identified.
- Repeated patching undertaken; full replacement now planned.

Key points previously agreed

- Patching acceptable only as a temporary mitigation.
- Estates responsible for managing the replacement programme.

Current status

Roof replacement anticipated to commence in Spring 2026, with completion targeted for July 2026.

Where it appears now

Agenda Item 5(d).

A6. Hardware Lab – Relocation of the Workshop

Summary

Consideration of options for relocating the workshop currently associated with the Hardware Lab, to address space, safety, and operational constraints.

History and prior consideration

- Raised repeatedly during 2025–26 in response to pressure on existing space and limitations of the current layout.
- Multiple internal and external options explored, including alternative spaces within the Department and potential shared facilities on the West Cambridge site.

Key points previously agreed

- No viable shared facilities are currently available on the West Cambridge site.
- Options involving the former library space or Roger Needham Building have been discussed.
- Any future proposals must take account of workshop machinery, safety requirements, and disruption.

Current status

No viable options are currently available; item remains under review and is reported only if circumstances change.

Where it appears now

Agenda Item 5(e).

A7. Use of the South Garden as a Quiet Place**Summary**

Potential use of the south garden area for quiet reflection or rest.

History and prior consideration

- University ownership creates constraints.
- Options considered: formal opening, gated access, or no change.

Key points previously agreed

- Formal designation would require opening to wider University use and incur costs.
- Limited interventions (e.g. gate for landscaping access) may be feasible.

Current status

Further discussion with the Head of Department pending.

Where it appears now

Agenda Item 5(h).

A8. Gender-Neutral / Universal Toilets**Summary**

Efforts to improve inclusive toilet provision within the building.

History and prior consideration

- Raised in the context of ED&I and changing external guidance.
- Several design options discussed, including full conversion of selected toilet blocks.

Key points previously agreed

- Conversion of non-public toilet blocks preferred.
- Cost information required before decisions can be made.
- Estates engagement has been slow and inconsistent.

Current status

Awaiting updated cost information and clarity on next steps.

Where it appears now

Agenda Item 5(i).

Maintenance note:

This appendix is updated only when a substantive change occurs (decision taken, action completed, or external constraint altered).