

University of Cambridge Computer Laboratory
Health and Safety Committee

Chairperson: D Gauvrit

Secretary: A Chop

Minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on Tuesday 7 October 2025 at 10 am in SW00.

Present: P Brooks, T Bytheway, A Chop, M Kuhn, M McDonnell, K Rybalochka, C Stewart.

Apologies: A Bishop, L Yates.

1. Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting were approved by the committee and the Chair.

2. Matters arising from the previous minutes

(5.1) – DG is finalising the checklist to be shared with event organisers.

(5.2) – The workplace safety instructions for new starters have been reviewed and updated.

(5.4) – The annual Department safety inspection: it has been established that representatives of the Safety Office don't have to be present for the inspection, and so we will trial a partial inspection (as a starting point to later decide what sections to divide the building into, how many sections to cover in a year).

The trial will involve 2 members of the committee going through a specific section of a building (e.g. half a floor) doing spot checks in the area – the approach has been approved by the Safety Office, as long as the inspections are on record and cover the entire building in a 3-year period.

(5.5) – DG has investigated what representatives need to present at the H&S committee meetings:

- DSO
- Staff rep.
- Academic staff rep.
- First Aider(s)
- Fire Manager
- Postgraduate (MPhil, PhD students) rep.
- Undergraduate students rep.
- Union rep.
- Safety Office rep.
- *Estates rep.* (during the committee meeting it has been decided this role is not necessary to fill)

Call for representatives to be distributed among undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as other department members.

(6.1) – Our Department is one of the first to trial the DSE online self-assessment among our members. The invitation has been shared with all department members in August. As of now, the assessment has been completed only by 29 members. A reminder will be sent by DG, following a 2-month reminder schedule agreed with CS.

(6.3) – It has been confirmed with Estates that it is Department's responsibility to add lifting equipment to the annual insurance list (pallet truck and 2 items in GE09: hoist + moving table) – DG has since contacted the contractors.

(9.1) – There hasn't been any increase in uptake regarding Fire Warden recruitment, while the number of our wardens remains very low for the building of our size. DG's proposition for payment incentives to Fire Wardens was rejected by the Safety Office. A question was raised whether the Department should come up with its own incentives.

Action: CS, DG.

(9.2) – The current circumstances are such that we have the emergency fire evacuation chairs, but we are not able to use them, since we don't have appropriately trained people. The chair supplier has changed, and to provide training (2h sessions) they are requesting for the old chairs (Globex) to be replaced. MMC to investigate if an alternative provider can offer training with current chairs, also potentially, if MMC can be certified to provide such training to others in the Department.

(10) – DG has obtained quotes for adding door assistance to our gridline doors, which are to be reviewed at the next Building and Environment Committee meeting.

(10.2) – DG has been in touch with the University water safety contact, and it was confirmed that the latest Legionella Risk Assessment in the Department dates to the 8th of Oct 2024. As the RA is valid for a 2-year period, we are currently still covered.

2.1 Safety Improvement Plan and Safety Action Plan

At the moment we don't have neither a Safety and Improvement plan, nor Safety Action Plan, as noted by the Safety Office during the latest audit. The need for the aforementioned plans has been discussed: since we identify WGB as a low hazard building and the Plans are not mandatory, it has been decided to go forward without them, and the necessary planning to be part of the routine committee meetings.

2.2 Workplace Hazardous Identification

DG has confirmed we have the Workplace Hazard Identification Plan in place, created by the previous DSO, Ali Digby.

3. Correspondence

Nothing to report.

4. First Aid and Accidents

Nothing to report.

PB has raised a question that the absence of reported accidents and near misses might be a reason for concern, as it potentially signifies underreporting.

DG has noted that payments to First Aiders might potentially be cut.

5. Safety Objectives

Following the latest Safety Audit, new Safety Objectives have been identified, as they have previously been missing, and the work on additional objectives is ongoing.

1. First Aim

Have an up-to-date General RA which covers all standard procedures of the department to support users and teaching. Including a sign-off system for all UTOs/line managers/event organisers within the department, which is annually reviewed.

2. Second Aim

Support the participation in DSE assessment within the whole department and try to reach an annual 60%.

We will include visitors in our 100%. This will help with reaching the target goal.

3. Third Aim

Drive the reporting of incidents, near misses & co. via AssessNet with the monthly goal of 20 near-miss reports

AP - a clear link for AssessNet should be added to our website

Once the full list of objectives is in place it will be brought up for discussion at the

following committee meeting – to identify which objectives require more work and which can be marked as reached.

Action: DG, CS

4. Safety Audit Report and Proposed Actions

4.1 General RA

In its audit the Safety Office has highlighted the absence of a general risk assessment for the Department building. It is currently being worked on and once completed it will be brought up for review to the Department members with managing/supervising roles on a yearly basis.

Action: DG, CS

4.2 Responsibility Matrix

Another aspect reported as missing in the Department by the Safety Office. It was agreed that a separate departmental matrix will be created, taking the general responsibility/training matrix from the Safety Office as an example, but simplifying it considering WGB being a low hazard building.

The matrix will showcase both mandatory and optional training as related to a specific role, but it has also been proposed that some training would be connected to the use of specific spaces/rooms in the Department, as opposed to just roles. The completed matrix is to be presented at the next committee meeting for review.

Action: DG

5. Workplace and Risk Assessments

Nothing to report.

6. Training

6.1 What training do we want

It has been agreed that general fire safety training and DSE assessments should be mandatory for all department members (including postgraduate students), and those visitors who stay for longer than 2 weeks and make regular use of departmental hotdesking spaces.

As part of the above discussion training for handling lithium batteries has been brought up as useful to implement, but the matter wasn't taking further as the University currently doesn't provide such a training.

6.2 Safety Policy - Manual handling

DG has conducted a review and an update of our current Safety Policy. As such it has been discovered that the departmental policy states that no work involving manual handling is to be carried out without the people involved having previously gone through the appropriate training.

At the moment we don't have a clear definition of what constitutes "manual handling" to know at what point the training can be enforced as mandatory – DG will present a definition for review at the next committee meeting.

Action: DG

7. Fire

As part of the discussion on Training, the matter of e-bikes being brought into the Department and other batteries being charged in the building has been brought up. As there is no University training on lithium batteries we can direct people to, and the fact constitutes a potential fire hazard, it has been agreed that the best course of

action would be to email the building users with instructions and a reminder of the general University policy on e-bikes, scooters and similar.

Action: CS

7.1 Fire RA

Our next Fire Risk Assessment is due on the 16th of October 2025, carried out by Estates with a report to be shared with the Department later.

There are some remaining outstanding actions from the previous FRA, DG and MMC are working to complete them before the next RA is due.

Action: DG, MMC

8. Building Matters

There are ongoing works on the water leaks, with roof replacement planned for the future.

The flushing of our water system is also underway, which will likely result in a replacement job being recommended to the Department.

9. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Nothing to report.

10. West Cambridge Site

Whittle Building project is almost finished – after which the outline of the streets is to be changed again, possibly in a few weeks, requiring extra care from people travelling through that area.

Disabled parking to be put on a side of WGB – previously ‘Goods In’ area.

As a result of the project we have lost parts of the ‘Goods In area’, which has been identified as a safety concern for people working in that zone.

The works on the paved path between the WGB and Maxwell centre have been completed, but the condition of the path still isn’t satisfactory.

11. Any Other Business

Nothing to report.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 24th February 2026 at 10am in SW00