

British Entomological & Natural History Society (BENHS)

Risk Assessment for, and Use of, the Society's Headquarters: the Pelham-Clinton Building at Dinton Pastures Country Park, Hurst, Berkshire, RG10 0TH.

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IMPORTANT

Members using the Pelham-Clinton Building must be made aware of this document by Council and strongly urged to read it, especially before entering the building for the first time. Also consult the back page regularly at other times to check the last time the document was reviewed.

A copy of this and other risk assessment documents (outdoor working and fire) are available within the building (tall cupboard in the Collections Room in a file entitled "Risk Assessments") and can also be viewed on the Society's website.

Visitors/guests: it is the responsibility of BENHS hosts, including workshop and event leaders, to ensure that visitors and guests under their charge are aware of the hazards and risks associated with the rooms that they are likely to be entering.

Disclaimer: please see the author's disclaimer in **Part 15** at the end of this document.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to highlight the hazards and associated risks that are likely to be encountered when using the Pelham-Clinton building at Dinton Pastures for any purpose, both within the building and its immediate environs.

This document should be checked for accuracy at least annually by Council and updated accordingly – check dates must be recorded in the table shown in **Part 14**. Updates must be made as soon as possible after any changes in the building or its use are made. Suggestions for corrections and amendments to this document are actively encouraged by users; means for contacting BENHS can be found in the Society's Journal and on the Society's website (www.benhs.org.uk).

2. BUILDING LAYOUT

Please consult the building floor plan **Part 13** at the end of this document.

3. IMPORTANT GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS & INFORMATION

- **Every BENHS member and guest** entering and using the Pelham-Clinton building for any purpose has a responsibility for their own safety, and the safety of others in the building, at all times. The BENHS cannot be considered liable for the consequences of obviously unwise or unsafe practices carried out within the building and its immediate external surroundings.
- **Every BENHS member and guest** using the building must be made aware of this document. In particular, leaders of workshops or other group events must inform all participants under their care where this document can be found within the building and strongly encourage everyone to read it. This document can also be found on the BENHS website.
- **IN CASE OF FIRE:**

The legal fire risk assessment is a separate document and is available in the Collections Room (tall cupboard) but three important points are presented below:

 - Fire extinguishers – a wall-mounted single powder extinguisher is located in both the collections room and the library (see building diagram in **Part 13** for positions). **To be updated**
 - Assembly point – café lawn almost directly opposite the front of the Pelham-Clinton building across the car park.
 - Escape – main entrance and Howarth Room fire escape door (both doors open outwards).
- **IN CASE OF ILLNESS OR INJURY:**
 - **First aid kit** (self-administration only) – (see building diagram for location).
 - **First-aider** – persons with first-aid qualifications cannot be expected to be in the building. First-aid may be available during normal working hours from some Wokingham Borough Council Countryside Service staff either in the Park grounds or in their office building (above the café). The office entrance is at the rear of the café. Ranger contact details are on the office door. The office phone number is 0118 934 2016 (normal office hours only).
 - A **defibrillator** can be found on the side wall of the café opposite the Pelham-Clinton building – instructions for use are on the machine.
 - **Nearest Accident & Emergency** – Royal Berkshire Hospital, Craven Road, Reading, RG1 5LE.
- **Use of chemicals** – chemicals are stored in a metal "flammables" cabinet in the Howarth Room. Chemicals can only be used at user's own risk and with the proper precautions, i.e. as described on the relevant container label. BENHS cannot be responsible for the incorrect or unsafe use of chemicals – if in any doubt about chemical usage please consult one of the Building Managers or

other personnel listed in **Part 12**. Particular care must be taken to avoid chemical(s) contact with other building users. Safety spectacles must be worn when decanting organic solvents, such as ethyl acetate or ethanol, or as directed by the label. Some safety spectacles are provided in a labelled box close to the metal cabinet – these should be returned to the box after use. Damaged spectacles must be discarded and the Buildings Manager or deputy informed. The use of appropriate protective gloves is recommended but these must be used if so stated on the container label.

- **Use of hot water urn at group events** – avoid skin contact with steam, hot water and the urn casing – all can cause serious burns. When removing the lid to refill take special care to avoid contact with steam. Do not attempt to move the urn when it contains hot water.
- **Water stopcock** – situated in the tall cupboard just inside and to the right of the collections room door from the hall; located in the lower right hand corner of the cupboard.
- **Electrical supply** – the Consumer Unit with mains supply switch is located in the kitchen (see **Part 6**). Electrical problems must be reported to the Buildings Manager or Deputy Buildings Manager and not attended to by persons using the building at the time.
- **Air-conditioning** – the main control and extraction unit is situated in the Library. The external units are located outside the building (see **Part 11**). Faults must be reported to the Buildings Manager or Deputy Buildings Manager and not attended to by persons using the building at the time. If a fault is indicated on the internal unit panel (red light flashing and external alarm) switch off the unit (large red switch on front of unit behind table)
- **Floors** – plastic floor tiles are present in all rooms except the Howarth Room. These are likely to be slippery when wet or muddy, so care is needed under these circumstances. Any spillages must be cleaned up immediately (includes coffee and tea PLEASE...).

4. ENTRANCE HALL

- **The door into the Collections Room** opens into the hall so, when in the hall, there is potential for collision with anyone entering the hall from the Collections Room (and the kitchen; see **PART 6**).
- The kitchen door also opens into the hall (see also **PART 6**). Care is needed when exiting the kitchen to avoid collision with anyone in the hall. (Note: the external and toilet doors open outwards, away from the hall.)
- The **External doormat** is retained just inside the hall by the door when not in use. This can slip over the internal doormat so care is needed when entering the building.

5. COLLECTIONS ROOM

- **Electrical**
 - **Sockets and cabling** – sockets are placed on the floor or low down on the room wall below bench level. Associated cables are potential trip and entanglement hazards and care is needed to avoid these hazards when at or near the work benches.
 - **Electrical equipment** – all user equipment (including personal items), e.g. microscopes, lamps chargers etc. must be turned off and unplugged from the mains sockets when not in use and at the end of a work session. PAT testing of all appliances must be carried out on new equipment as soon as possible after purchase and on old equipment according to date shown on the previous PAT test label. Personal electrical items must be PAT tested if use is shared with other occupants of the building or, if not done, then users must be informed accordingly, prior to use.

- **Collections cabinets**
 - **High drawers** and items stored on cabinet tops.
 - Folding 2- and 3-step aluminium step-ladders are available in the room – weight limits are indicated on the top step of each. These are not suitable for some of the highest drawers or anything located on top of the cabinets.
 - Higher reach folding step-ladders are located in the library – there are no weight limits shown on these ladders so commonsense usage is required. They are also fairly heavy so care is needed when moving them.
 - Ask for assistance if access to any drawers is difficult.
 - **Glass-topped drawers** – report any glass cracks or breakages to the Curator, Lanternist, Buildings Manager or Deputy Buildings Manager as soon as detected (contact details in **Part 12** below). Do not attempt repair without consulting one of the above persons. A drawer with broken glass must not be returned to its cabinet – leave on a table near the door with a clear warning note indicating the damage.
- **General entomological equipment**
 - **Pins, forceps, scissors etc.** will likely be present on the benches, especially during workshops and Open Days, so vigilance and care is needed when working at the benches to avoid injury.
 - **Own equipment** – use of member's or guest's own equipment is at their discretion but these members or guests must use their equipment in consideration of safety to themselves and other room users.
- **Loft entry** – ceiling trap door entry to the loft is possible from this room (see **Part 10** before attempting to enter the loft).

6. KITCHEN

There are no cooking appliances in the kitchen

- **Kettle(s)** – risk of scalding. Basic use considerations apply, e.g. avoid water on electrics, avoid steam contact with bare skin and don't overfill.
- **Cleaning fluids** – read instructions on container. Use of household gloves when cleaning is recommended (do not use any gloves that might be present unless labelled as "**non-allergenic**").
- **Hot water** – by kettle only (there is no direct hot water supply in the kitchen).
- **Slippery floor** – when wet. Dry any spills with cloth or paper towel.
- **Leaving the kitchen** – take care that no one is immediately present outside the kitchen as the door opens outwards into the hall.
- **Note:** the main electrical switch and breakers are high on the kitchen wall. Do not do anything to enable water to reach this unit.

7. TOILET

- **Cleaning fluids** – read instructions on container. Use of household gloves when cleaning is recommended (see **Part 6** for glove information).
- **Hot water** from heater at wash basin may scald if faulty.
- **Slippery floor** – when wet. Dry any spills with cloth or paper towel.

8. LIBRARY

- **Bookshelves** – present from floor to ceiling. Many of library contents, e.g. books and journals, are located on the highest shelves and can only be accessed by step-ladder.
 - **Step-ladders** – two high-reach folding step-ladders are located in the library. There are no weight limits shown on these ladders so commonsense usage is required. They are also fairly heavy so care is needed when moving them.
 - **Chairs** – do not stand on chairs to access bookshelf contents as they are unlikely to be strong enough to hold much weight.
 - **Books** – these can be heavy. Do not extend arm-reach excessively to access – use a step-ladder.
- **Computers** – desktop computers plus peripherals are located in the library. These must be switched off at the electricity mains, and preferably plugs removed from sockets, when work is completed.

9. HOWARTH ROOM

- **Entry door from the library** – this is spring-closing and cannot be opened from the inside. However the opening bar has an integral key to secure it in the entry (pushed-in) position. This bar should be so secured before entering the room. If the door is locked when shut, exiting the room (and the building) can only be via the fire door, which may be alarmed.
- **Folding tables & chair stacks** – these are fairly heavy, if possible avoid setting up without assistance.
- **Loft entry** – ceiling trap door entry to the loft is possible from this room (see **Part 10** before attempting to enter the loft).

10. LOFT

- Access to the loft is via trapdoor-ladders in the Collections and Howarth Rooms. The opening and closing of these ladders can be tricky and must only be attempted by persons familiar with the loft and its means of entry; see next point.
- The loft itself may contain hazards unexpected by persons moving through it. If at all possible access to the loft should be avoided unless someone else is present in the building. **Any person wishing to enter the loft must have received authorisation and instruction before attempting to do so.**

11. EXTERNAL (OUTDOOR) HAZARDS

- **Main access road to the car park** – this is directly adjacent to the gravel area at the front of the building and can be very busy at peak times. Take great care when crossing the road to the car park, the café and the rest of the Country Park.
- **Gravel frontage** – loose gravel, potentially slippery.
- **Entering and leaving** the building after dark – potentially hazardous if path is not lit. Automatic lighting is installed along the main path. Contact the buildings manager if these lights have failed.
- **Air-conditioning units** – these are located on the outside wall of the Collections Room and can only be accessed through a locked gate. They should only be inspected by the Buildings Manager, Deputy Buildings Manager, or their representatives, and appropriately qualified persons.
- **The paths and external environs** (excluding the air-conditioning units) are the responsibility of the Country Park authorities. Report any potential hazards to Wokingham Borough Council Countryside Service staff based in the office above the café. **NOT SURE THIS IS TRUE – Lease needs interpreting.**

12. ADDITIONAL USEFUL INFORMATION

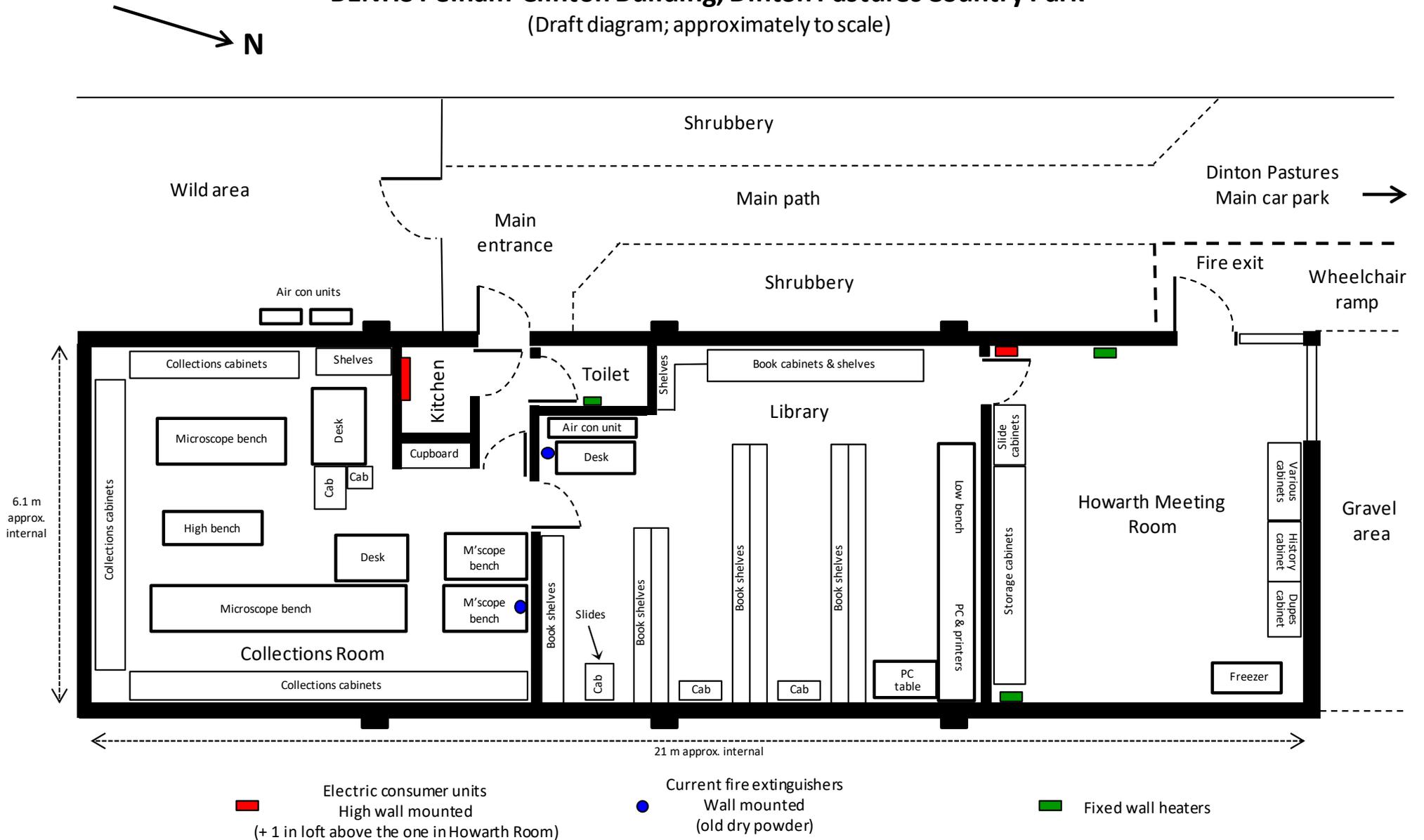
(Also posted on the door of the tall cupboard in the Collections Room)

Buildings Manager	Martin Albertini: mobile 0729 368 933
Deputy Buildings Manager	Jon Cole: mobile 07875 475 788
Nearest Accident & Emergency department	Royal Berkshire Hospital, Craven Road, Reading, RG1 5LE
Nearest defibrillator	On external café wall located near café entrance from main car park
Nearest chemist	Sainsbury's Winnersh (5 minutes drive)
Parking information	
Parking charge	Varies – charges apply from 6 am to 10 pm daily. Hourly rates up to 4 hours, £6 after this time at time of writing.
Free parking permits	<u>Two</u> are available from the Collections Room on a first come first served basis but are reserved for leaders on workshop and other event days
Prohibited parking	Parking is <u>not</u> allowed on the hard standing adjacent to the front of the Pelham-Clinton (PC) Building, even with a paid-for ticket, except for loading and unloading.
Parking enforcement	Private enforcement company – very keen! If in the main car park parking must be within marked bays. 5 minutes grace allowed outside of paid-for time (usually!)
Mobile phone reception	Generally good for most of the site
Nearest landline phone	Collections Room and Library (both portable)
Nearest additional toilets (daytime hours only)	Dragonfly Café and Loddon Room off main car park
Broadband connection	Poor. Often unusable evenings and weekends
Nearest café	Dragonfly Café (seasonal opening hours)
Nearest pub	Wheelwright Arms (opposite main park entrance)
Nearest supermarket	Sainsbury's, Winnersh (5 minutes drive)
Nearest railway station	Winnersh (15 minutes walk approx. – no parking)
Dinton Pastures office (Wokingham Borough Council Countryside Service)	Over café – entrance at rear of café. Phone number: 0118 934 2016
Other useful folk (contact via website or messages left in Collections Room)	
Administrative Assistant	Rosemary Hill
Curator of collections	Peter Chandler
Librarian	Ian Sims
Suggested additional information – please add to copy of this page in the Collections Room	

13. BUILDING FLOOR PLAN

BENHS Pelham-Clinton Building, Dinton Pastures Country Park

(Draft diagram; approximately to scale)



15. AUTHOR'S DISCLAIMER

This document was prepared by the author at the request of the BENHS Council. The contents of the document are based on the author's extensive experience in project leadership in corporate chemistry and biology laboratories and offices. The author has no specific, professional qualifications in the production of such documents.