

Supplementary Information

Synthesis, Structure & Properties of CuBiSeCl₂: A Chalcogenide Material with Low Thermal Conductivity

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The data underlying this study are openly available in University of Liverpool Data

Repository at: <https://datacat.liverpool.ac.uk/id/eprint/2550>

The Supplementary Information is divided into the following sections

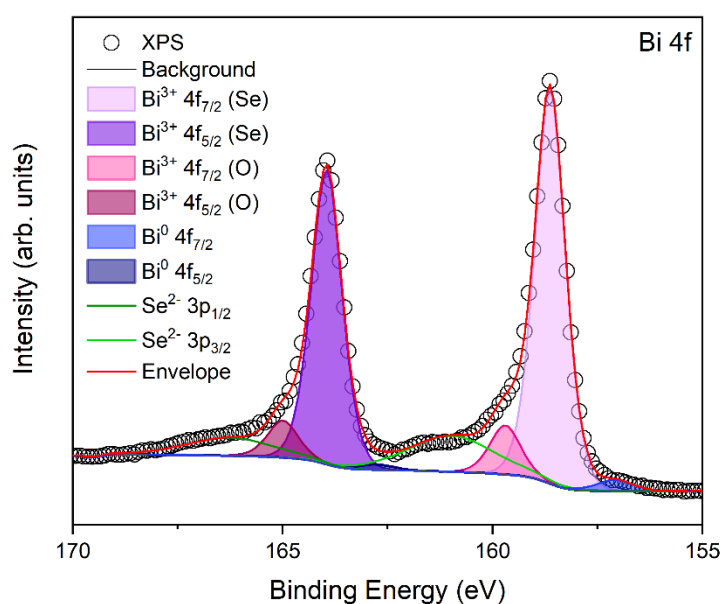
- 1. Crystal Structure**
 - i. Oxidation State Determination**
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Crystal Structure

I. Oxidation State Determination

XPS was used to confirm the oxidation states of all species in CuBiSeCl_2 through comparison with literature reference values. Where possible, Full Width at Half Maximum (FWHM) and energy uncertainty values have been included from literature.

S1. XPS of Bi 4f core levels



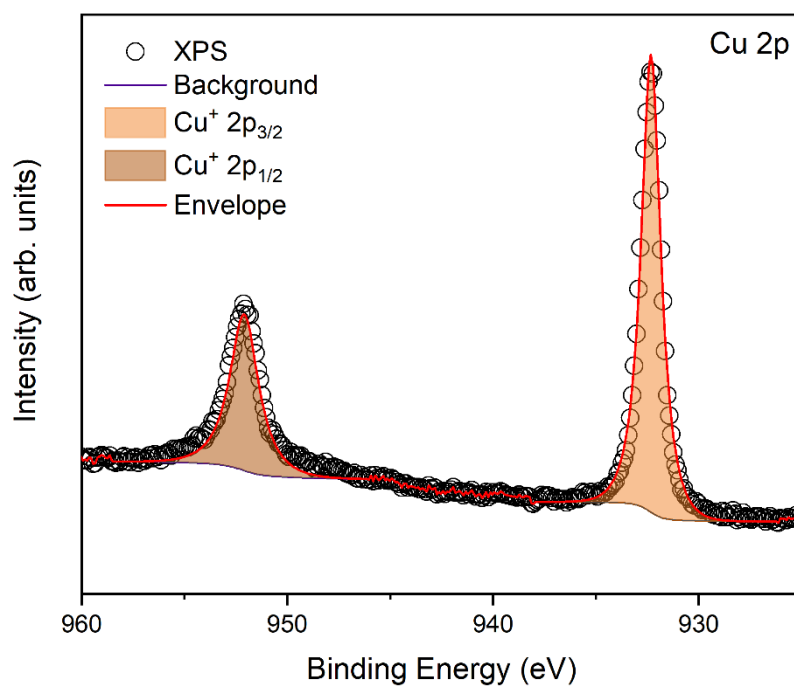
A small amount of oxygen contamination is visible in the Bi 4f core level spectra, attributed to surface oxidation. Note the overlap of the Bi 4f spectra with the Se 3p spectra, shown in green.

S2. Table of Bi 4f Binding Energies / Fitting Parameters

Bi 4f	Experimental		Literature	
	Binding Energy (eV)	FWHM (eV)	Binding Energy (eV)	FWHM (eV)
$\text{Bi}^{3+} 4f_{7/2} (\text{Se})$	158.63	0.86	158.20 ¹	/
$\text{Bi}^{3+} 4f_{5/2} (\text{Se})$	163.94	0.86	163.40 ¹	/
$\text{Bi}^{3+} 4f_{7/2} (\text{O})$	159.72	0.86	160.00 ²	/
$\text{Bi}^{3+} 4f_{5/2} (\text{O})$	164.92	0.86	165.28 ²	/
$\text{Bi}^0 4f_{7/2}$	157.10	0.97	156.92 ²	/
$\text{Bi}^0 4f_{5/2}$	162.78	0.97	162.30 ¹	/

Se ²⁻ 3p _{3/2}	161.12	2.40	160.70 ³	/
Se ²⁻ 3p _{1/2}	166.25	2.40	166.20 ⁴	/

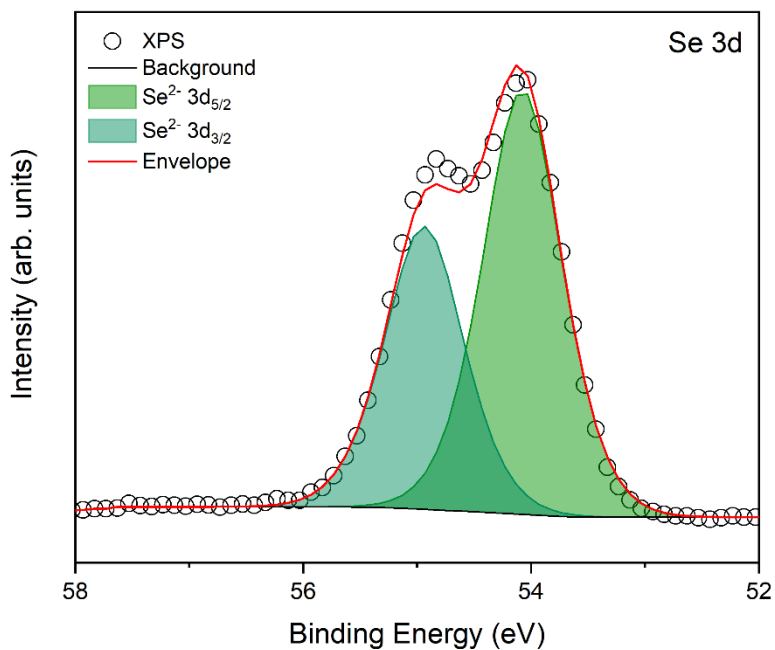
S3. XPS of Cu 2p core levels



S4. Table of Cu 2p Binding Energies / Fitting Parameters

Cu 2p Orbital	Experimental		Literature	
	Binding Energy (eV)	FWHM (eV)	Binding Energy (eV)	FWHM (eV)
Cu ⁺ 2p _{3/2}	932.32	1.18	932.49 ⁵	0.99
Cu ⁺ 2p _{1/2}	952.10	1.88	952.31 ⁵	1.41

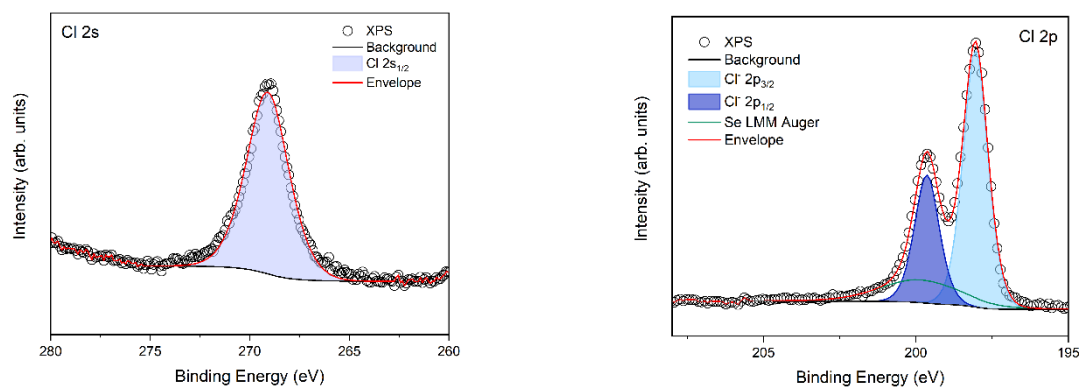
S5. XPS of Se 3d core levels



S6. Table of Se 3d Binding Energies / Fitting Parameters

Se 3d	Experimental		Literature	
Orbital	Binding Energy (eV)	FWHM (eV)	Binding Energy (eV)	FWHM (eV)
Se ²⁻ 3d _{5/2}	54.08	0.82	54.30 ⁵	0.67
Se ²⁻ 3d _{3/2}	54.93	0.82	55.15 ⁵	0.70

S7. XPS of Cl 2s / Cl 2p core levels



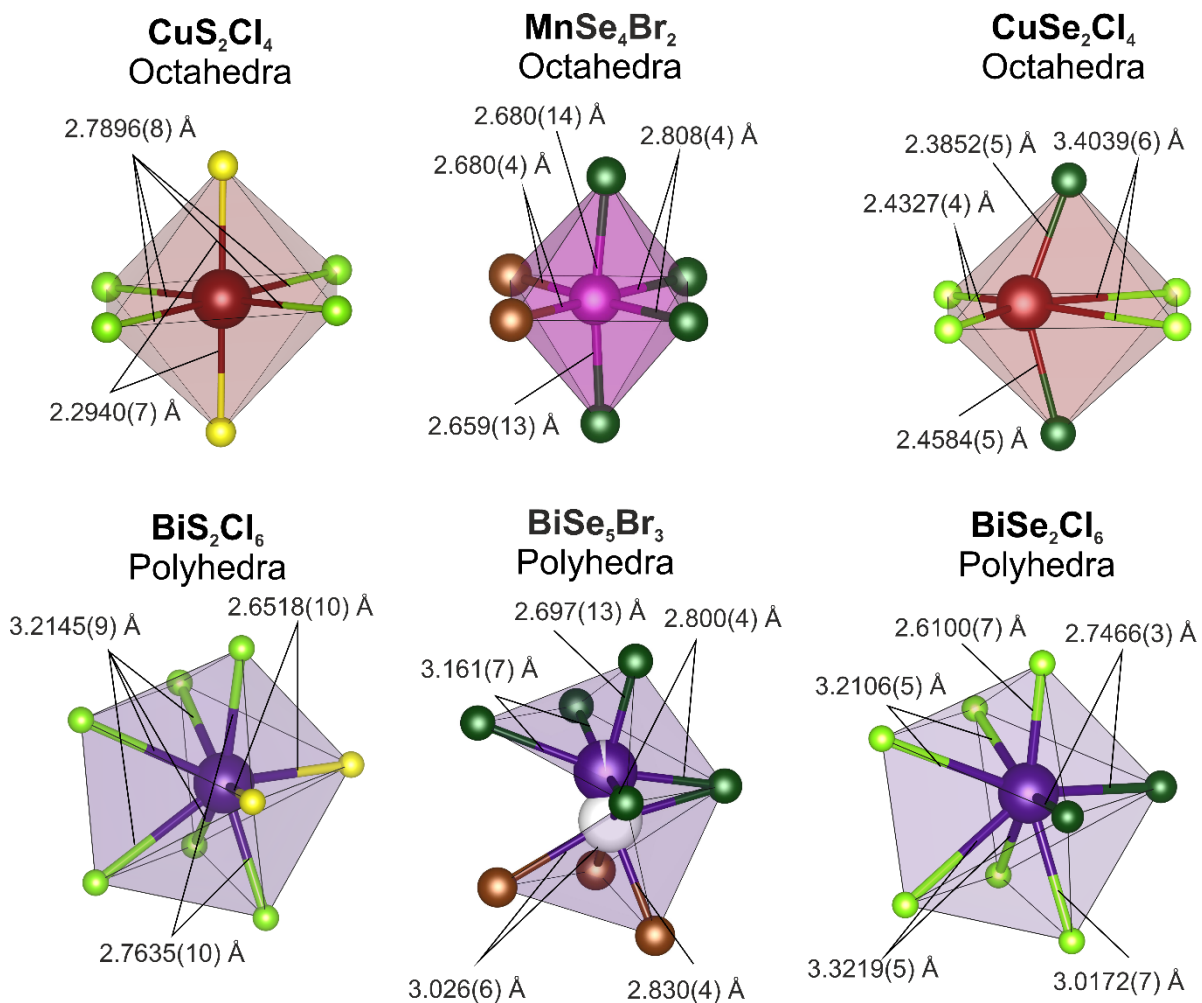
S8. Table of Cl 2s / 2p Binding Energies / Fitting Parameters

Orbital	Experimental		Literature	
	Binding Energy (eV)	FWHM (eV)	Binding Energy (eV)	FWHM (eV)
Cl 2s				
Cl ⁻ 2s _{1/2}	269.10	2.51	270 ⁶	/
Cl 2p				
Cl ⁻ 2p _{3/2}	198.04	0.94	198.40 ⁷	/
Cl ⁻ 2p _{1/2}	199.64	0.94	200.80 ⁸	1.0
Se LMM Auger	199.58	3.40	/	/

Crystal Structure

II – Structural Description

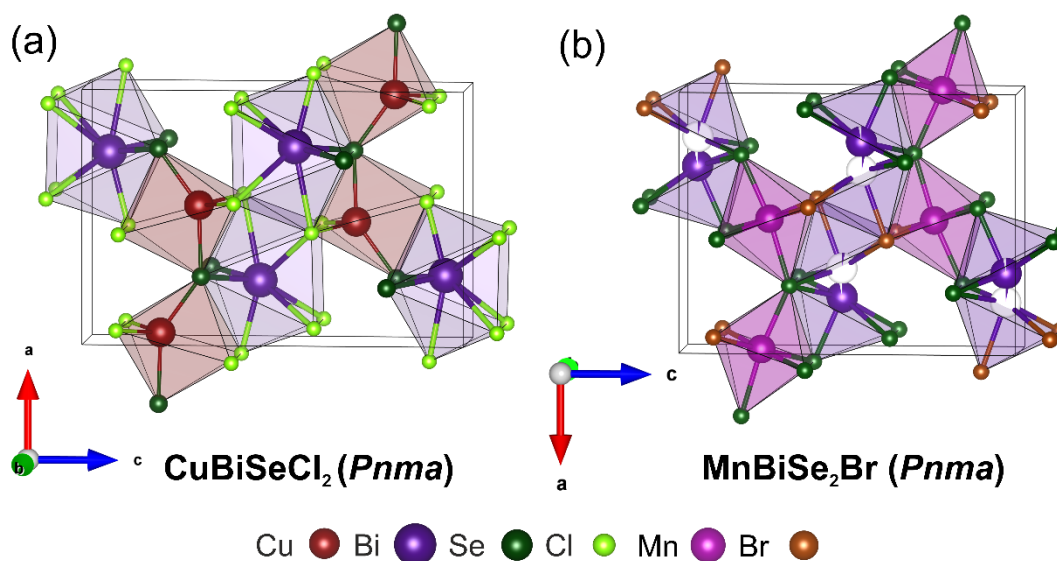
S9. Structural comparison between local environments of CuBiSCl_2 ($Cmcm$)⁹, MnBiSe_2Br ($Pnma$)¹⁰ and CuBiSeCl_2 ($Pnma$) unit cells, with fully labelled bond lengths. Note that in the BiSe_5Br_3 polyhedra, only the Bi-Se bond lengths for the 0.970 occupied Bi site are shown.



S10. Group-subgroup scheme in the Bärnighausen formalism¹¹⁻¹⁴ for the (CuBiSeCl₂) type [6] subcell and the superstructure CuBiSeCl₂. The indices for the klassengleiche (k) symmetry reduction, the unit cell transformation, as well as the evolution of the atomic parameters are given. The atomic positions listed in S16 and S20 are transformed from the standard setting to match the theoretical model.

$Cmcm$ $CuBiSeCl_2$	Cu: 4a	Bi: 4c	S: 4c	Cl: 8f	
	2/m..	m2m	m2m	m...	
$k2$ <i>c, a, b</i> \downarrow $Pnma$ <i>theoretical</i>	0	0	0	0	
	0	0.7003	0.0627	0.3524	
	0	1/4	1/4	0.0618	
	Cu: 4c	Bi: 4c	S: 4c	Cl1: 4c	Cl2: 4c
	.m.	.m.	.m.	.m.	.m.
	0.0000	0.2500	0.2500	0.0618	0.4383
	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4
	0.7500	0.4503	0.8127	0.1024	0.1024
$Pnma$ $CuBiSeCl_2$ <i>experimental</i>	Cu: 4c	Bi: 4c	Se: 4c	Cl1: 4c	Cl2: 4c
	.m.	.m.	.m.	.m.	.m.
	0.9596	0.2285	0.2394	0.0658	0.4408
	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4
	0.8004	0.4475	0.8057	0.0955	0.1016

S11. Structural comparison between unit cells of CuBiSeCl₂ (*Pnma*) and MnBiSe₂Br (*Pnma*)¹⁰ Cu⁺ is shown as octahedrally coordinated to allow for easier comparison between unit cells.



S12. Bond Valence Sums (BVS) calculated using bond valence parameters from ¹⁵ for (i) octahedrally and tetrahedrally coordinated Cu⁺ positioned on the 4c site in the experimentally observed *Pnma* CuBiSeCl₂ material; (ii) octahedrally coordinated Cu⁺ positioned on the 4a site in the hypothetical higher symmetry *Cmcm* CuBiSeCl₂ structure; (iii) octahedrally coordinated Cu⁺ positioned on the 4a site in the experimentally observed *Cmcm* CuBiSCl₂ structure.

(i) Cu BVS (*Pnma*, experimentally observed CuBiSeCl₂).

CuBiSeCl₂ (<i>Pnma</i>)	Length (Å)	v_i
<i>Octahedral Cu (4c)</i>		
Cu-Cl (Long)	3.4035	0.0153
Cu-Cl (Short)	2.4334	0.2112
Cu-Se (1)	2.4573	0.2217
Cu-Se (2)	2.3856	0.2692
	V_{Oct}	0.9439
<i>Tetrahedral Cu (4c)</i>		
Cu-Cl (Short)	2.4334	0.2112
Cu-Se (1)	2.4573	0.2217
Cu-Se (2)	2.3856	0.2692
	V_{Tet}	0.9132

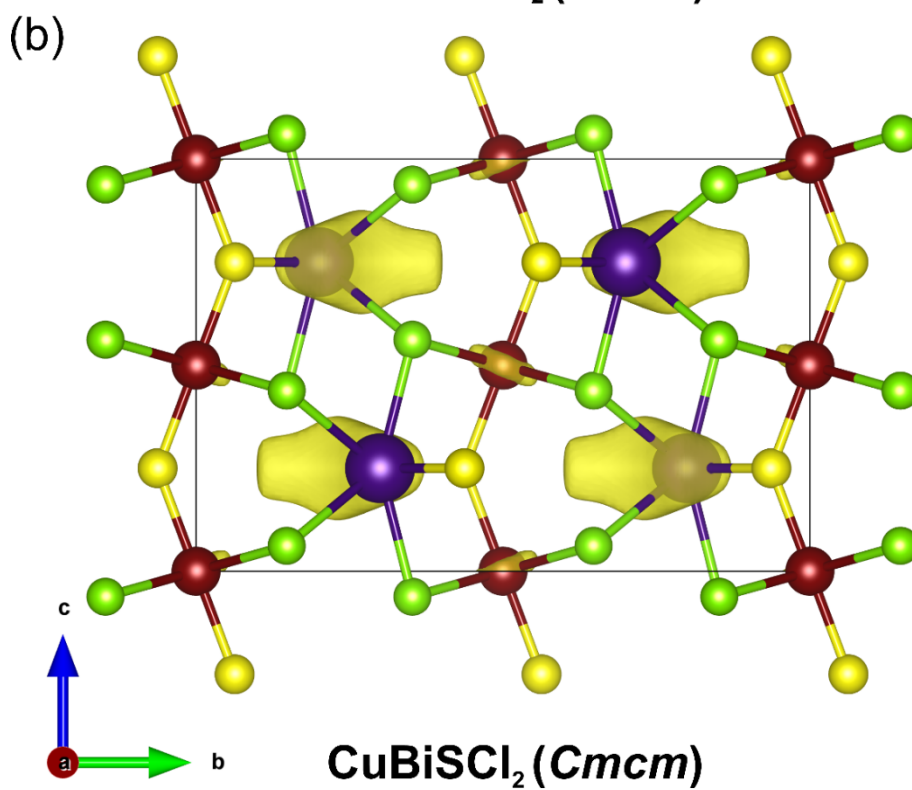
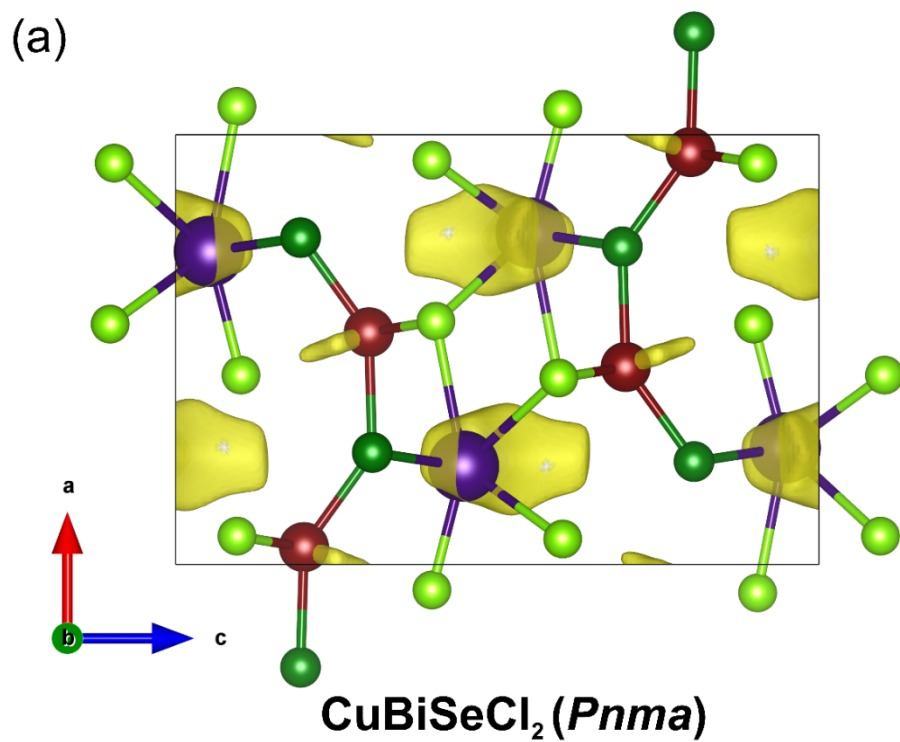
(ii) Cu BVS (*Cmcm*, theoretical, high symmetry CuBiSeCl₂).

CuBiSeCl₂ (<i>Cmcm</i>)	Length (Å)	v_i
<i>Octahedral Cu (4a)</i>		
Cu-Cl (1)	2.91845	0.005692
Cu-Cl (2)	2.91845	0.005692
Cu-Se (1)	2.42145	0.2443
Cu-Se (2)	2.42145	0.2443
	V_{Oct}	0.7163

(iii) Cu BVS (*Cmcm*, experimentally observed CuBiSCl₂).

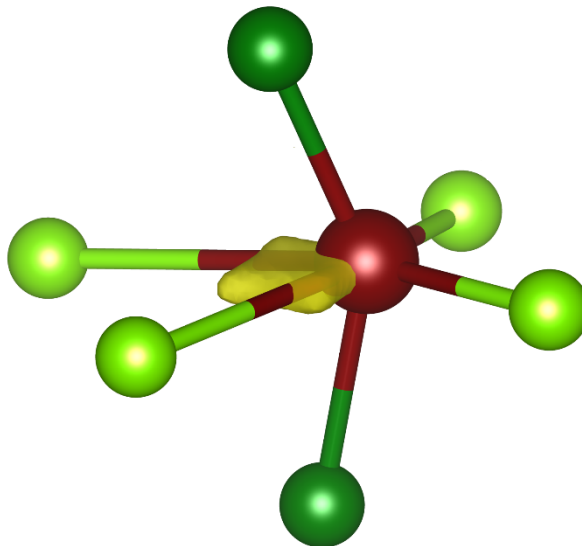
CuBiSCl₂ (<i>Cmcm</i>)	Length (Å)	v_i
<i>Octahedral Cu (4a)</i>		
Cu-Cl (1)	2.7896	0.08063
Cu-Cl (2)	2.7896	0.08063
Cu-Se (1)	2.294	0.2711
Cu-Se (2)	2.294	0.2711
	V_{Oct}	0.8647

S13. Bond Valence Maps for (a) CuBiSeCl_2 ($Pnma$) and (b) CuBiSCl_2 ($Cmcm$). Bond valence sum maps were generated using the parameters published in ¹⁶

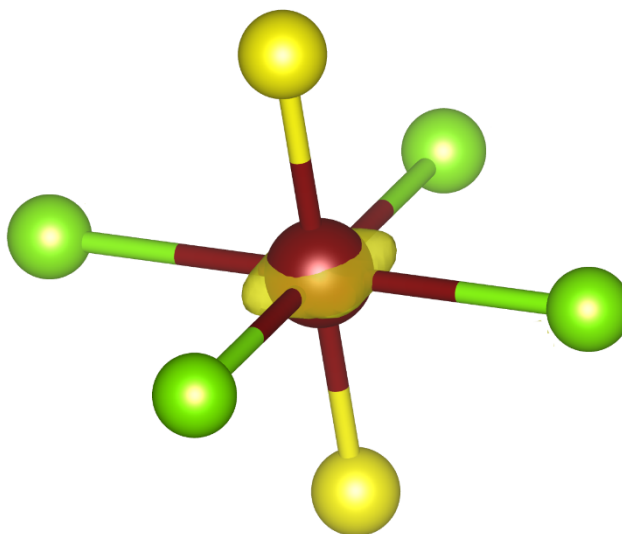


S14. Bond Valence Maps for (a) CuSe_2Cl_4 environments in CuBiSeCl_2 (*Pnma*) and (b) CuS_2Cl_4 environments in CuBiSCl_2 (*Cmcm*).

(i)



(ii)



S15. Single Crystal data, data collection and structure refinement parameters of CuBiSeCl₂

Empirical formula	CuBiSeCl ₂
Molecular weight (g. mol ⁻¹)	422.4
Temperature (K)	100
Symmetry	<i>Orthorhombic</i>
Space group	<i>P n m a</i> (62)
Unit cell dimensions (Å)	a= 8.78415(6) b= 3.99803(3) c= 13.13998(9)
Volume (Å ³)	461.467(6)
Z	4
Data Collection	
λ [Å]	0.6889
Calculated density (g cm ⁻³)	6.080
Crystal shape	Platelet
Crystal dimensions (μm)	35-25-5
Color	Black
Absorption correction	Empirical
θ (min–max) (°)	2.704-34.986
μ (mm ⁻¹ ; for λ Kα = 0.56087Å)	47.29
F(000)	720
Reciprocal space recording	-14 ≤ h ≤ 14 -6 ≤ k ≤ 6 -21 ≤ l ≤ 21
No. of measured reflections	9843
No. of independent reflections	1240
I > 3σ(I) (total)	1215
Refinement	
Number of refined parameters	31
Refinement method	Sigma
Weighting scheme	
R1(F) [I > 3σ(I)]/R1(F ²) (all data, %)	0.0119 - 0.0114
wR2(F ²) [I > 3σ(I)]/wR2(F ²) (all data, %)	0.0256 - 0.0254
Goodness of Fit	1.168
Max/Min residual electronic density (e ⁻ /Å ³)	0.911/-1.685

S16. Atomic Positions and Isotropic Thermal Displacement parameters for CuBiSeCl₂. The atomic positions listed for CuBiSeCl₂ are standardized.

Atom	Wyck.	<i>x</i>	<i>y</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>U</i> _{eq.}
Bi1	4 <i>c</i>	0.27145(2)	1/4	0.44748(2)	0.00532(3)
Se1	4 <i>c</i>	0.26059(3)	1/4	0.80575(2)	0.00496(4)
Cu1	4 <i>c</i>	0.04035(4)	1/4	0.69957(3)	0.01027(6)
Cl1	4 <i>c</i>	0.05935(7)	1/4	0.10163 (4)	0.00634(9)
Cl2	4 <i>c</i>	0.43403(7)	1/4	0.09546 (4)	0.00722(9)

S17. Anisotropic Thermal Parameters *U*_{ij} (Å²)

Atom	<i>U</i> ₁₁	<i>U</i> ₂₂	<i>U</i> ₃₃	<i>U</i> ₁₂	<i>U</i> ₁₃	<i>U</i> ₂₃
Bi1	0.00565(4)	0.00600(4)	0.00430(4)	0	0.00018(2)	0
Se1	0.00491(9)	0.00628(10)	0.00369(9)	0	0.00039(7)	0
Cu1	0.00868(14)	0.01284(15)	0.00930(13)	0	0.00347(10)	0
Cl1	0.0059(2)	0.0076(2)	0.0055(2)	0	0.00011(17)	0
Cl2	0.0050(2)	0.0101(2)	0.0065(2)	0	0.00036(17)	0

S18. Main Bond Distances (Å) for CuBiSeCl₂

Atoms 1,2	<i>d</i> 1,2 (Å)	Atoms 1,2	<i>d</i> 1,2 (Å)
Bi1-Se1	2.74661(18)×2	Cu1-Se1	2.3852(4)
Bi1-Cl1	3.0172(6)	Cu1-Se1	2.4585(4)
Bi1-Cl2	2.6100(6)	Cu1-Cl1	2.4327(4) ×2
		Cu1-Cl2	3.4039(6)

S19. Structure refinement against powder diffraction data at room temperature

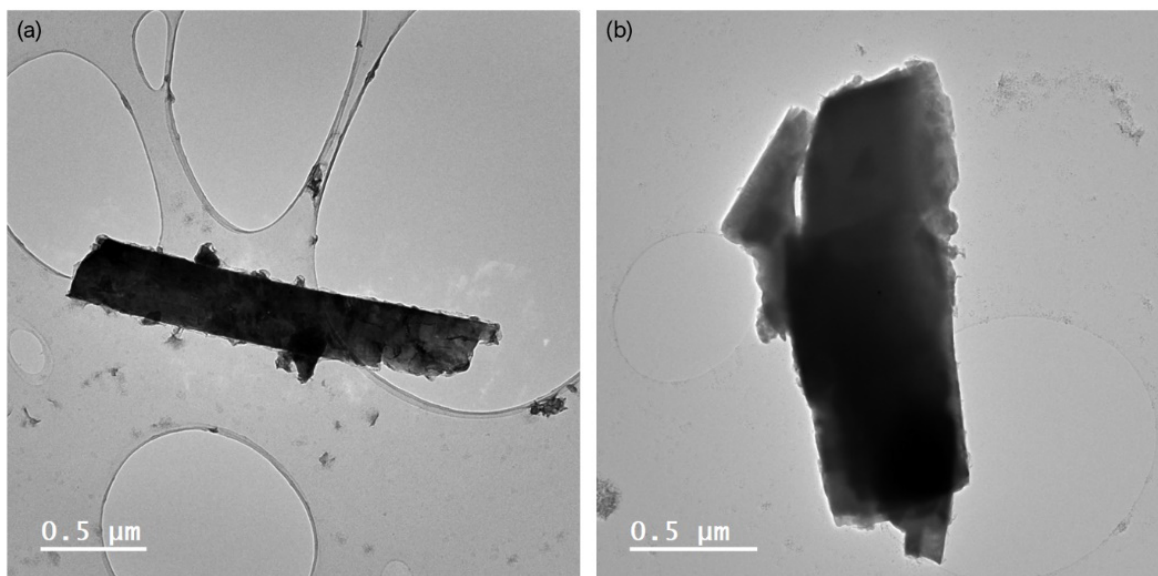
Empirical Formula	CuBiSeCl ₂
Crystal System	Orthorhombic
Space Group	<i>Pnma</i> (62)
Cell Parameters	$a = 8.8110$ (7) Å
	$b = 4.0325$ (6) Å
	$c = 13.106$ (21) Å
	$\alpha, \beta, \gamma = 90.0^\circ$
Cell Volume	465.686 Å ³
Density	6.025 g cm ⁻³
Pawley R _{wp}	2.043 %
Rietveld R _{wp}	2.36 %
R _{exp}	1.588 %
R _p	1.593 %
gof	1.490

S20 Atomic positions, isotropic displacement parameters and site occupancy factors from Rietveld refinement against powder diffraction data

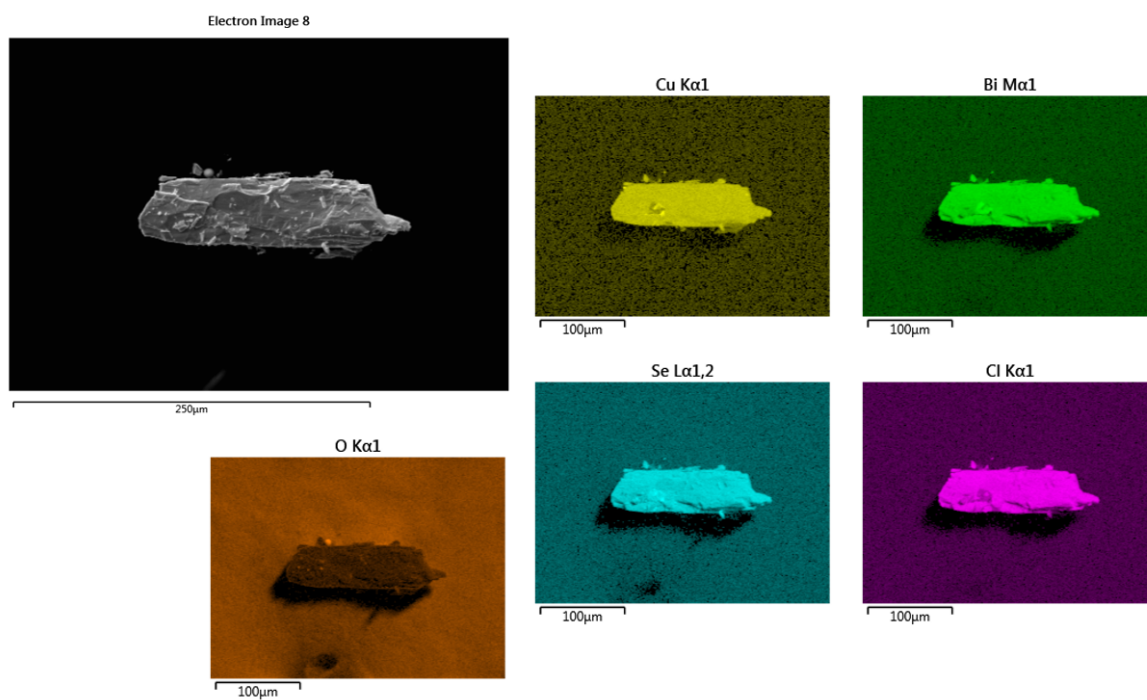
Formula	Site	x	y	z	Occ.	U _{iso} (Å ²)
CuBiSeCl ₂	Bi1	0.265(2)	0.25	0.4495(9)	1.0	0.00595(4)
	Se1	0.255(6)	0.25	0.809(2)	1.0	0.00456(8)
	Cu1	0.0324(6)	0.25	0.708(4)	1.0	0.0443(3)
	Cl1	0.059(1)	0.25	0.101(7)	1.0	0.0038(4)
	Cl2	0.44(1)	0.25	0.098(31)	1.0	0.0139(4)

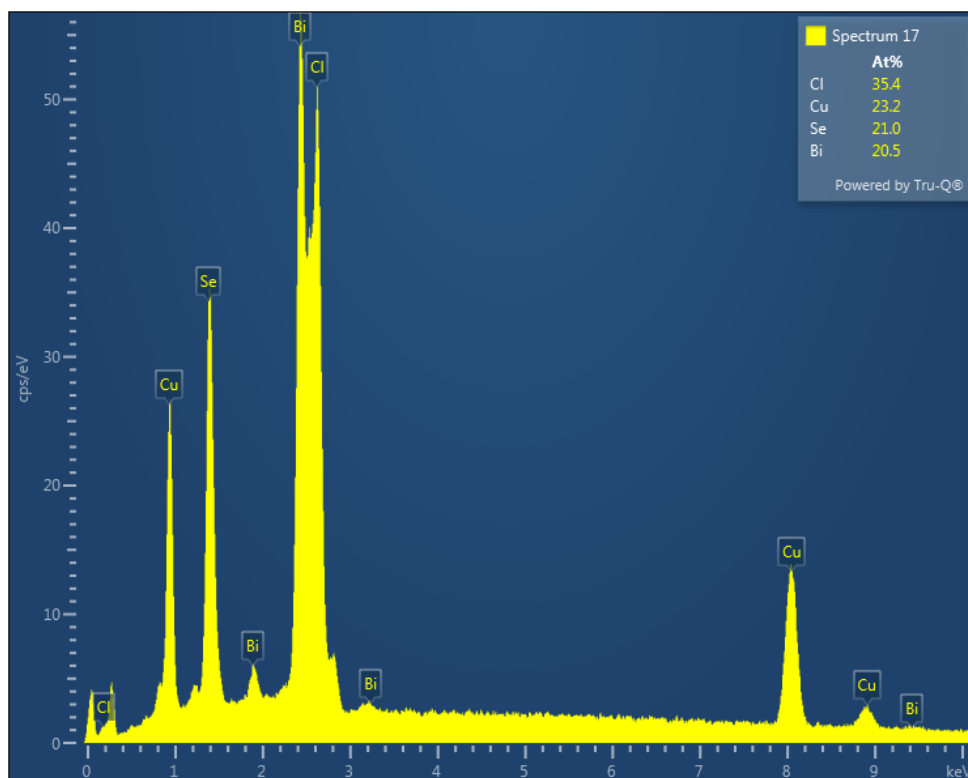
Compositional Analysis

S21. Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM) Images of CuBiSeCl_2 Particles



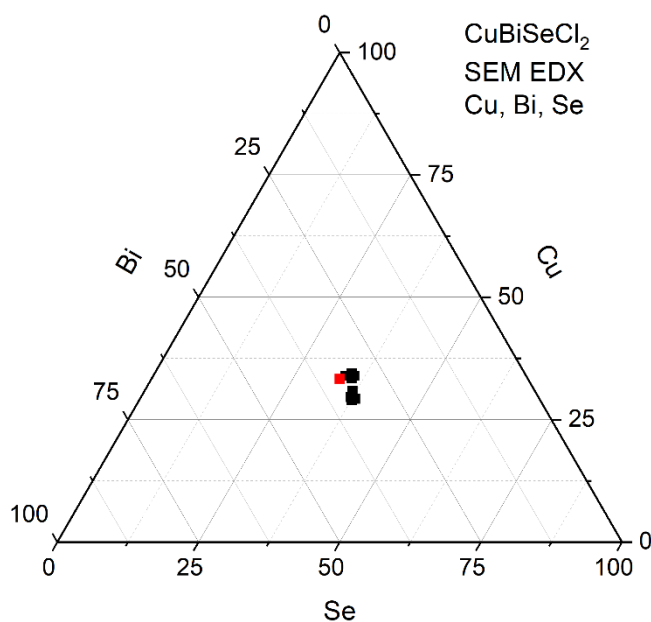
S22. Elemental Mapping of particle used for SCXRD analysis with EDX spectrum for reference





In some cases, SEM EDX is not accurate in quantitatively measuring Cl in the presence of Bi due to the peak overlap, meaning that both EDX and WDX were needed to confirm the exact composition of CuBiSeCl_2 powder. However, with a significant Cl peak intensity as is present in the above EDX spectrum, SEM EDX elemental mapping can be used to qualitatively provide an estimate of elemental homogeneity in the material.

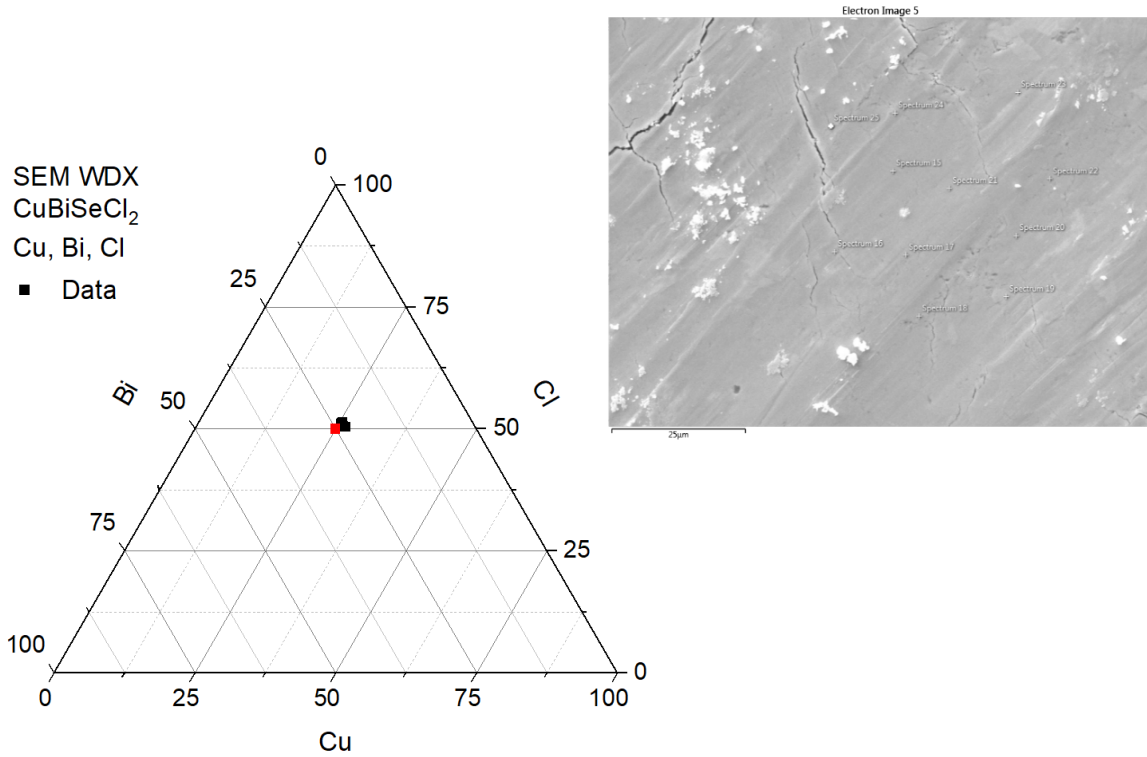
S23. SEM-EDX analysis of CuBiSeCl_2 powder pressed into pellet.



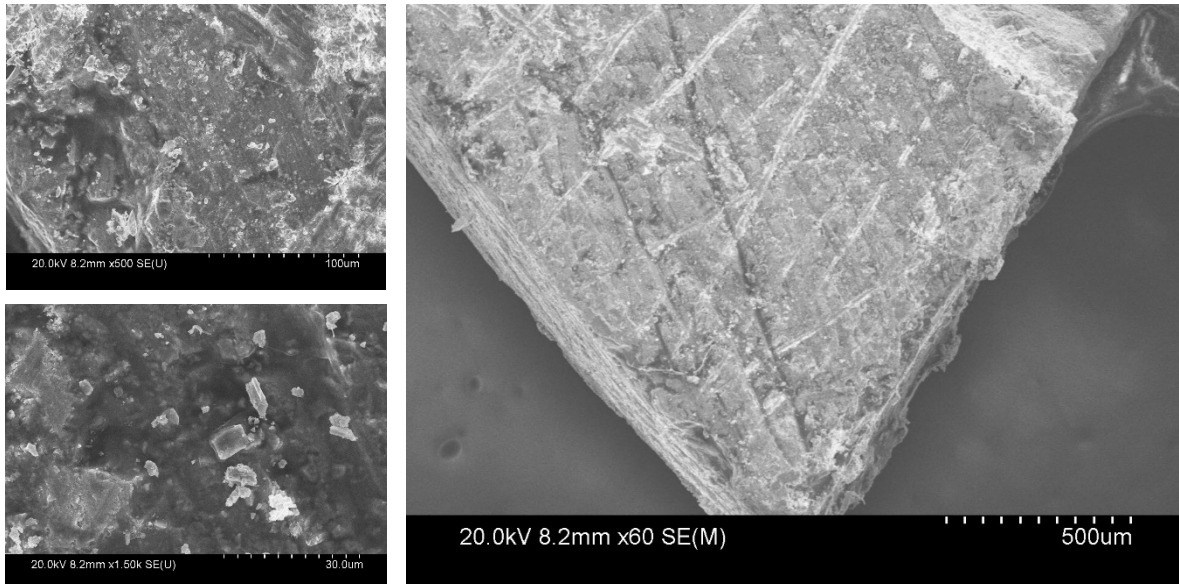
The point in red depicts the exact $\text{Cu}_{1.0}\text{Bi}_{1.0}\text{Se}_{1.0}\text{Cl}_{2.0}$ stoichiometry for reference. Some deviation from the target composition is observed in the EDX data, however the composition is confirmed through WDX analysis (S24).

S24. WDX Analysis of CuBiSeCl_2 powder pressed into pellet & image of pellet surface

Correction factors for WDX were determined from measurement of BiOCl and CuCl_2 standards

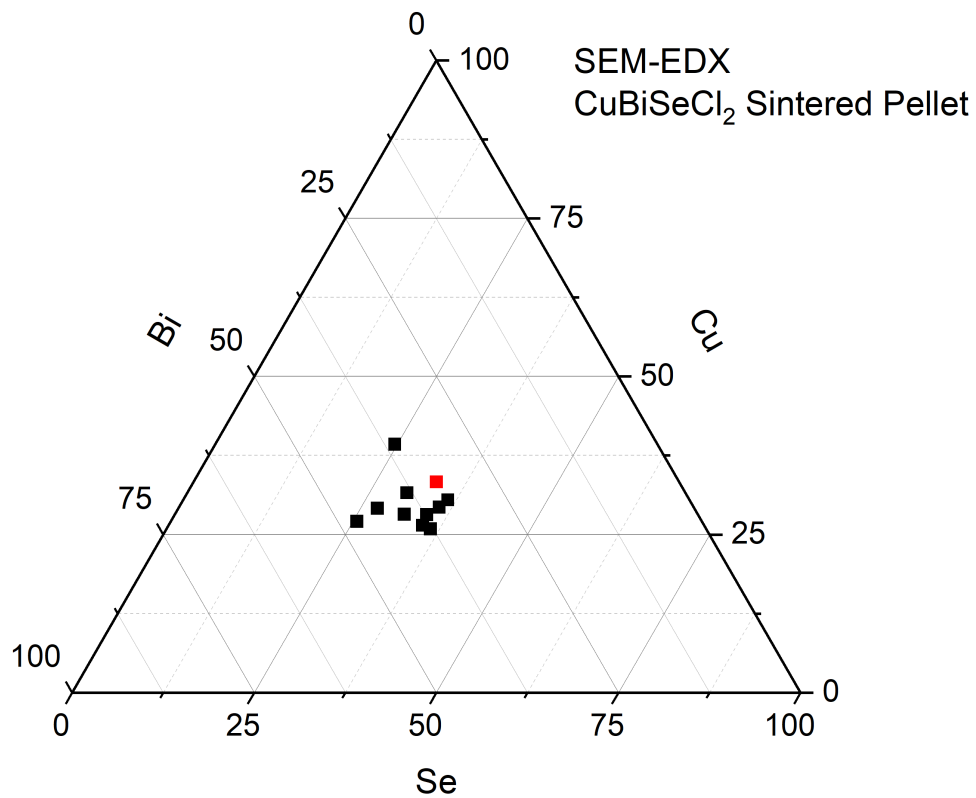
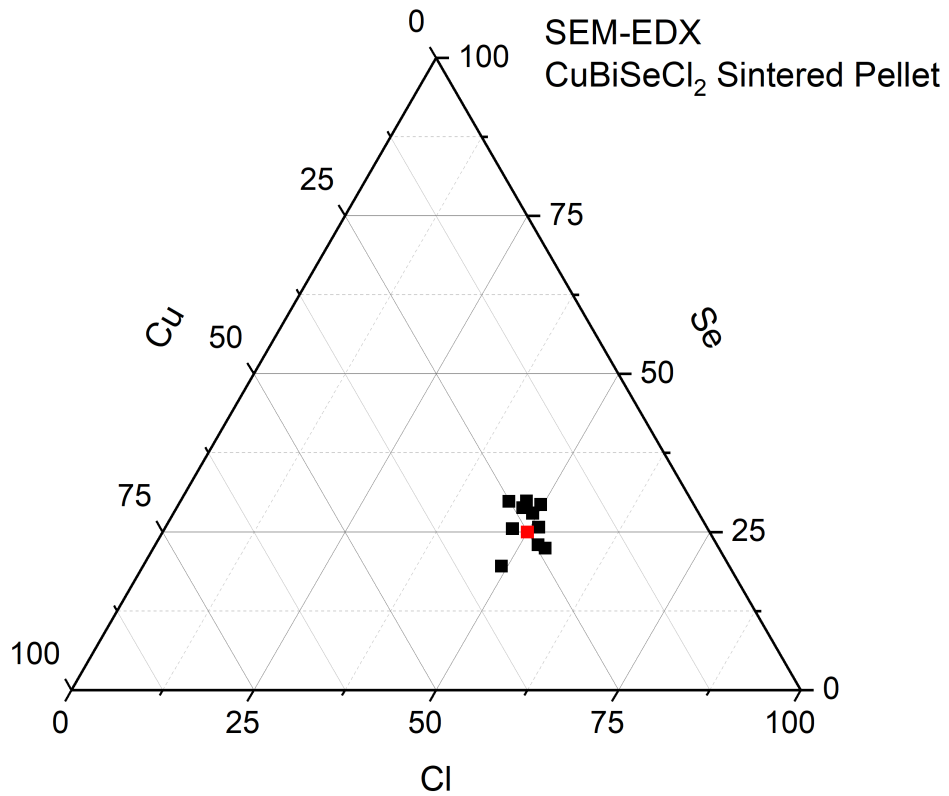


S25. Sintered CuBiSeCl_2 Pellet SEM Images

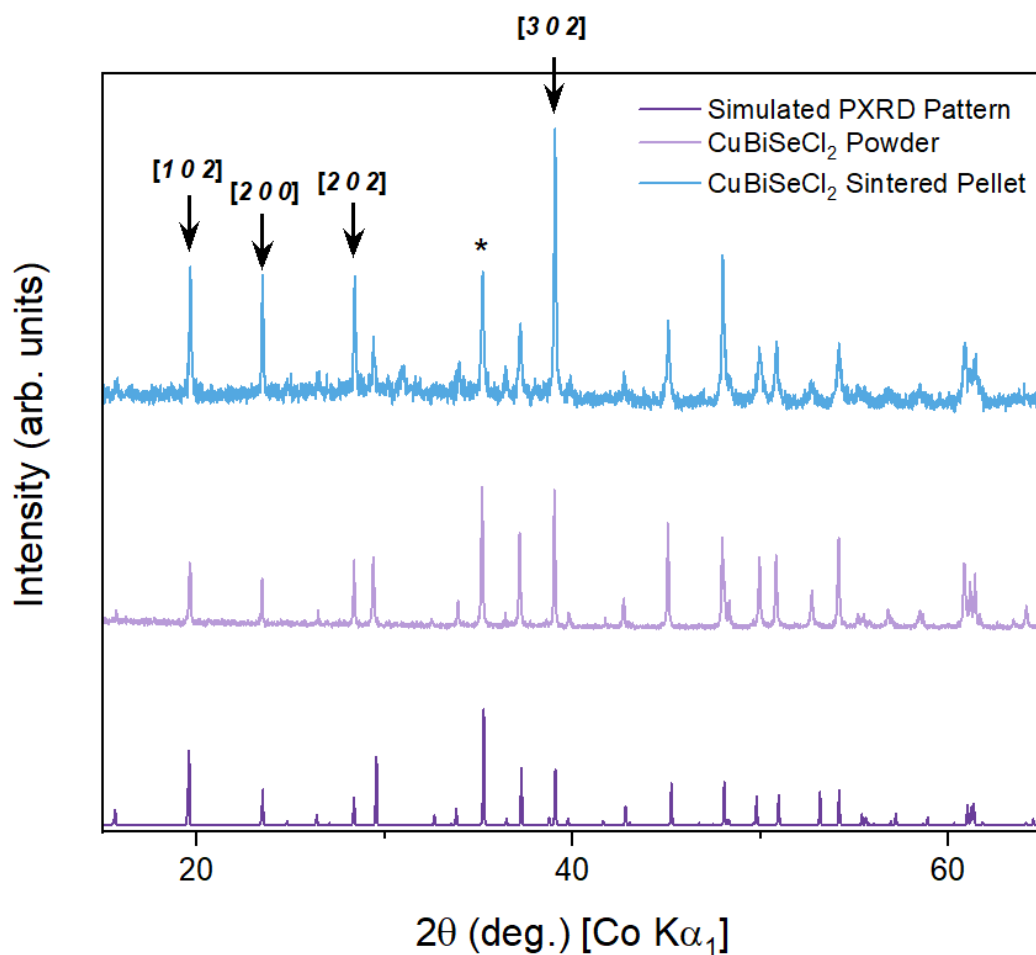


S26. SEM-EDX Analysis of Sintered CuBiSeCl_2 Pellet (88% dense)

The red dot indicates exact CuBiSeCl_2 stoichiometry.

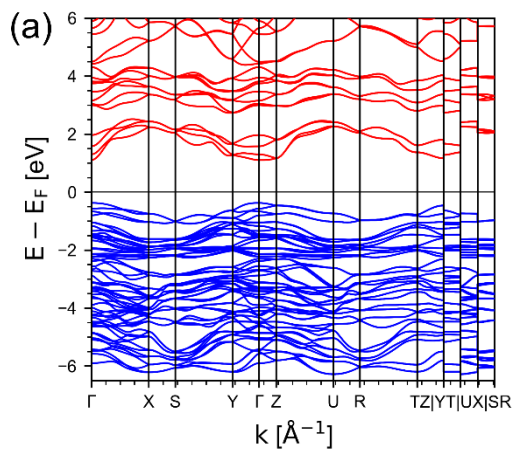


S27. PXRD data from sintered CuBiSeCl_2 pellet (88% dense), CuBiSeCl_2 powder and simulated powder pattern to highlight preferred orientation effects in the sintered pellet. Specific $[h0l]$ and $[h00]$ intensities are indicated to highlight the preferred orientation in these directions. The asterisk denotes the peak of which the intensity is kept constant in each PXRD dataset.

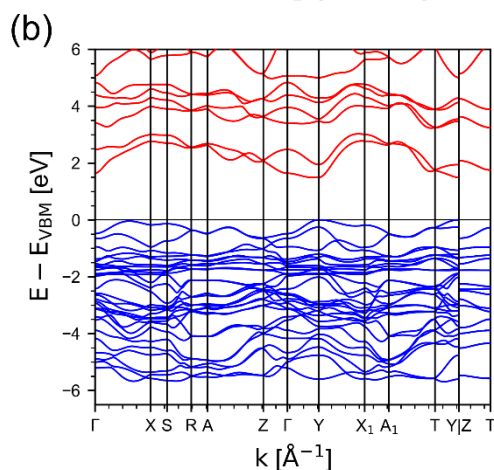


Computational Details

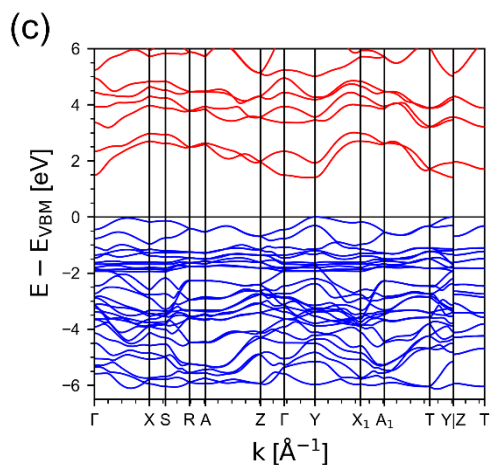
S28. Band structures calculated for (a) experimentally observed CuBiSeCl_2 ($Pnma$) (b) CuBiSeCl_2 in the hypothetical ($Cmcm$) structure (c) CuBiSCl_2 ($Cmcm$). The band structure of CuBiSCl_2 was calculated using the cif from ⁹.



CuBiSeCl_2 ($Pnma$)



CuBiSeCl_2 ($Cmcm$)

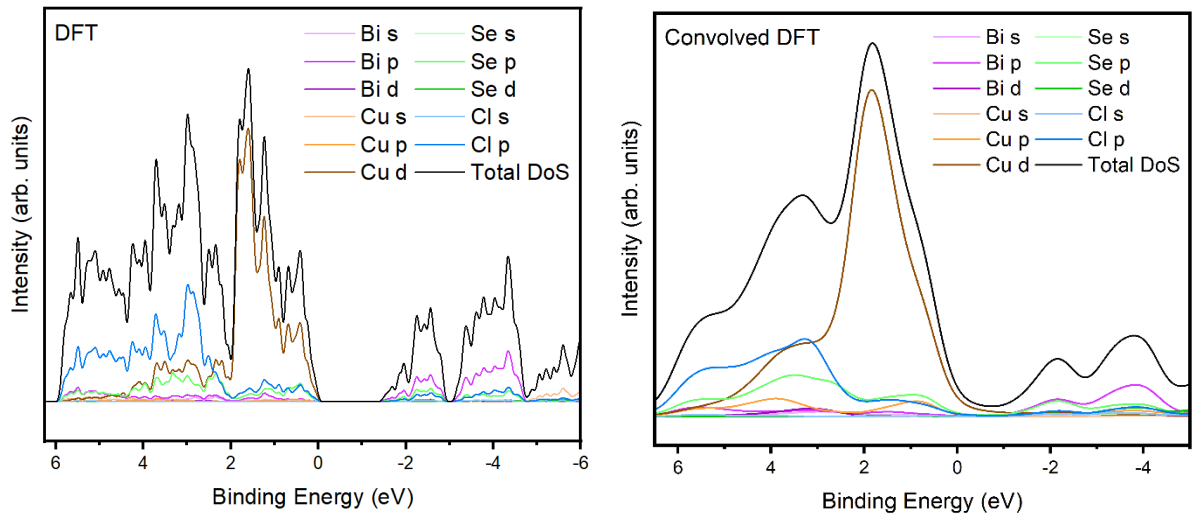


CuBiSCl_2 ($Cmcm$)

S29. Description of Density of States (DoS) Broadening

Density of States (DoS) calculations use Density Functional Theory (DFT) to describe the ground state valence band of a material based on its structure. X-Ray Photoemission Spectroscopy (XPS) measures the photo-electrons released from a material as a result of x-rays of a known energy irradiating the sample. DoS calculations do not account for sources of error, such as the spectrometer resolution, and realistic physical process, such as life-time broadening, that occur during experimental photoemission processes. Some deviation is always expected between experiment and calculation, since the process of photoemission perturbs electrons from the ground state. However, adjustments made to the original DoS data allow for closer comparison between XPS and DoS data by accurately representing realistic photoemission effects. Photoionisation cross sections from Scofield¹⁷ were applied to each orbital to account for the different photoemission probabilities of each species.¹⁸ The data were also convolved with Gaussian (width 0.25 eV) and Lorentzian functions (width 0.25 eV¹⁹) to account for spectrometer resolution and lifetime broadening effects, respectively. Modifying the DoS in this way allows for closer comparison between computational calculations and experimental measurement of the valence band. After these convolutions, the DoS were shifted by 1.04 eV to align with the XPS data calibrated with respect to the Fermi edge of Ag. The background was also subtracted from the experimentally determined XPS data, and the data was scaled accordingly to match the DoS. Since the DoS was calculated in terms of $E-E_{\text{VBM}}$, the DoS was inverted along the x axis to allow for comparison with the VB.

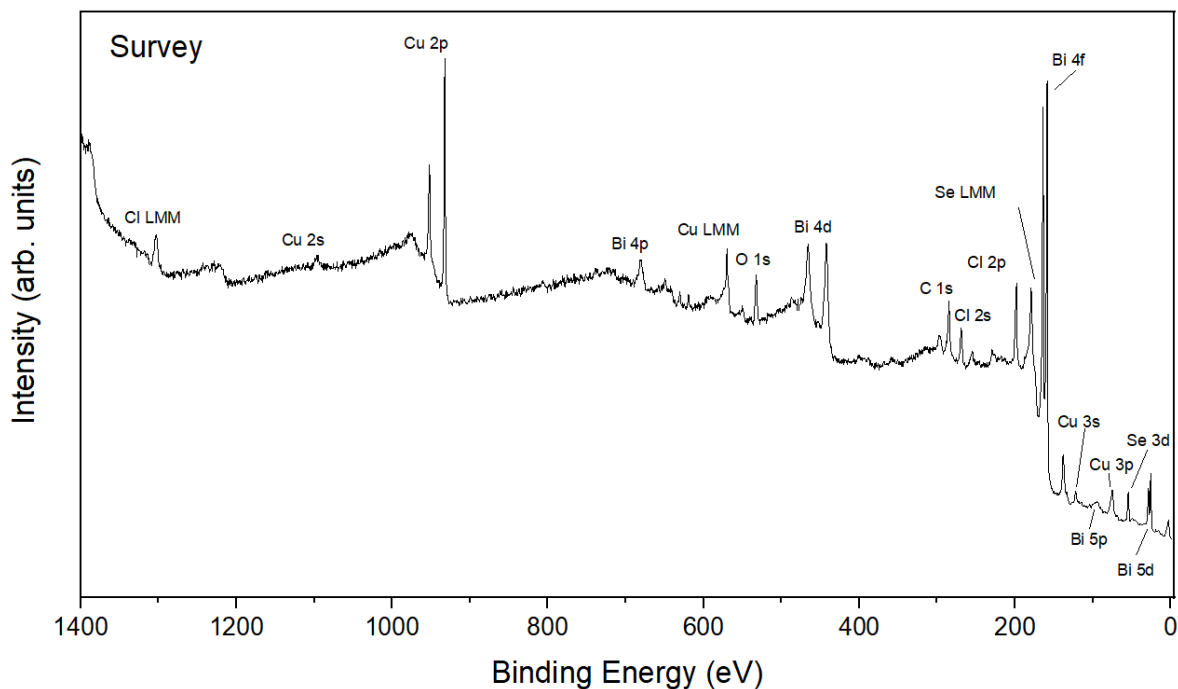
S30. As-calculated DoS for CuBiSeCl₂ (left) DoS after photoionisation cross section corrections and convolution with Gaussian and Lorentzian functions. (right)



Electronic Structure

S31. XPS Survey Scan

All expected chemical species are present. Presence of the O 1s core level indicates a minor amount of surface oxidation, due to exposure to air during transit of the sample.



S32. Description of Band Alignment Determination

Band alignments for CuBiSeCl_2 were determined from measurement of the Secondary Electron Cut-off (SEC) region, shown in S33. The spectrometer work function (ϕ_s) was first determined from the SEC using Eq. 1.

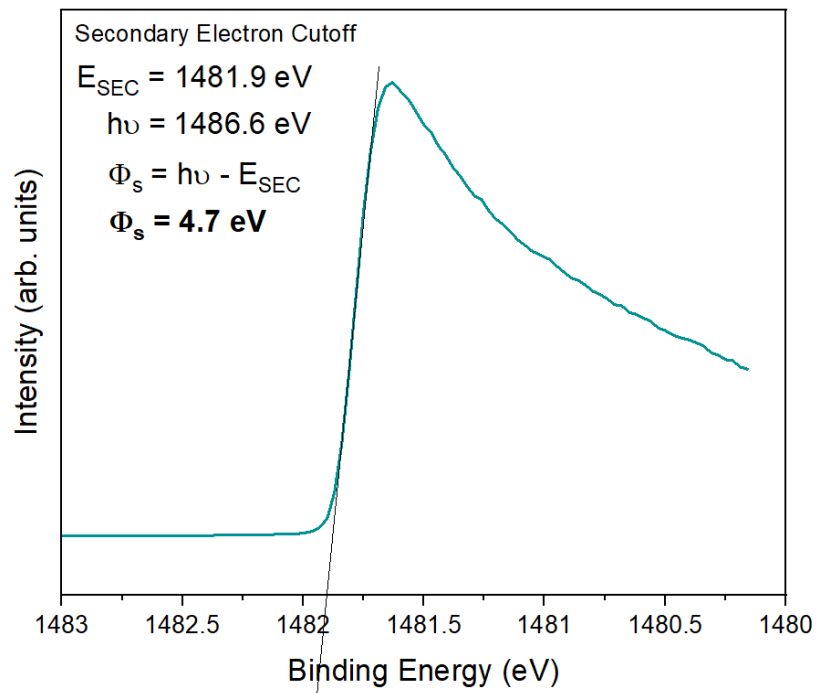
$$1. \quad \phi_s = h\nu - E_{SEC}$$

Here, $h\nu$ is the photon energy and E_{SEC} is the energy of the onset of the SEC region. From this, the Ionisation Potential (IP) was calculated using Eq. 2.

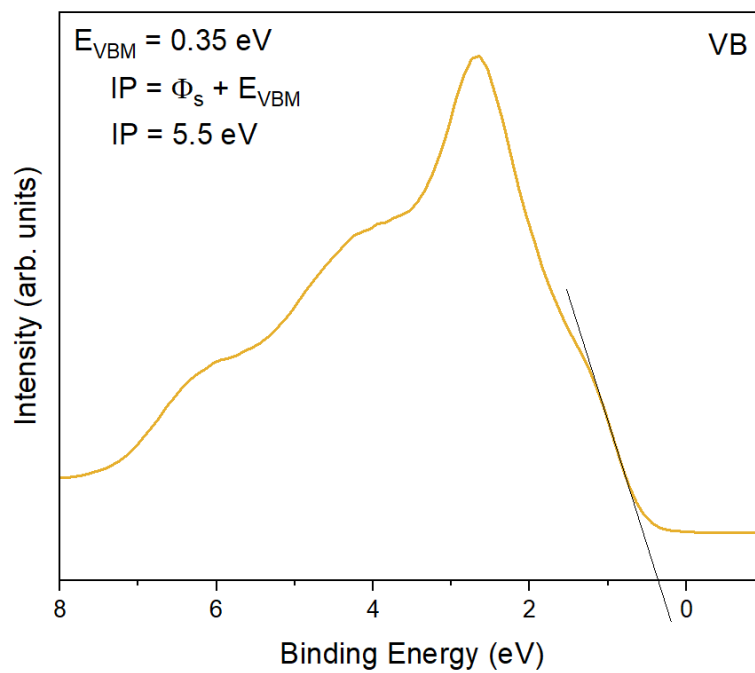
$$2. \quad IP = \phi_s + E_{VBM}$$

Where E_{VBM} is the binding energy of the Valence Band Maximum (VBM). The band alignments can thus be calculated using the IP, shown in S34.

S33. Secondary Electron Cut-off (SEC) Region

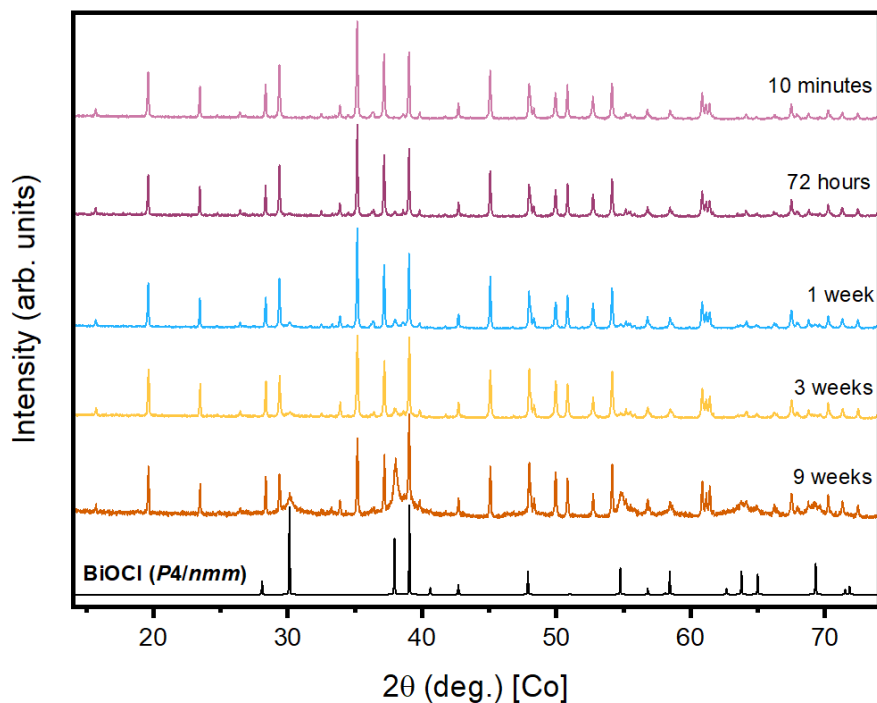


S34. Determination of Ionisation Potential using position of Valence Band Maximum (VBM)

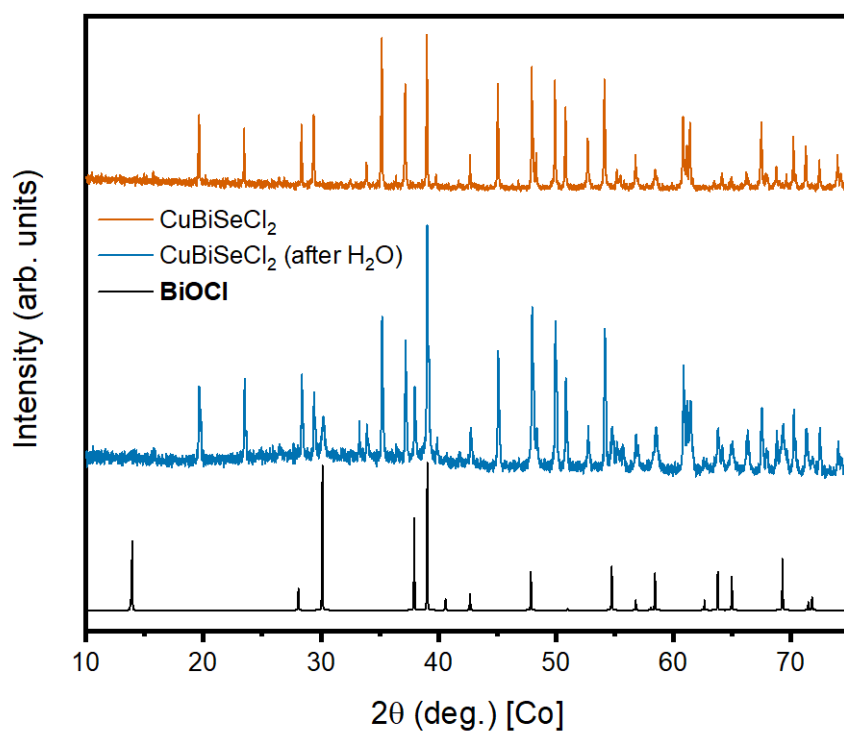


Environmental Stability

S35. - PXRDs of CuBiSeCl_2 powder left in ambient air for 9 weeks. The BiOCl PXRD data is simulated from ²⁰.



S36. - PXRD data of CuBiSeCl_2 powder before / after exposure to water. The BiOCl PXRD data is simulated from ²⁰.



Thermal Properties

S37. Description of mathematical equations used for thermal conductivity modelling

The minimum thermal conductivity (κ_{min}) of CuBiSeCl₂ was estimated using the Cahill model,¹⁸ whereby the transfer of energy is enabled by the nearest neighbour interactions involved in a random walk of coupled quantum harmonic oscillators. This is described using three Debye integrals, which are taken over three sound modes (two transverse and one longitudinal) in Eq. 3.

$$3. \quad \kappa_{min} = \left(\frac{\pi}{6}\right)^{1/3} k_B n^{2/3} \sum_i v_i \left(\frac{T}{\Theta_i}\right)^2 \int_0^{\Theta_i/T} \frac{x^3 e^x}{(e^x - 1)^2} dx$$

Where n is the number density of atoms, v_i is the speed of sound in each sound mode, and Θ_i is the cut-off frequency (Debye temperature) for each polarization:

$$\Theta_i = v_i \left(\frac{\hbar}{k_B}\right) (6\pi^2 n)^{1/3}$$

The diffuson-mediated thermal conductivity (κ_{diff}) was also calculated for CuBiSeCl₂ using the model developed by Agne et al.¹⁹ Equation 4 approximates the limit of diffusive thermal conductivity in a material.

$$4. \quad \kappa_{diff}(T) \approx \frac{n^{-2/3} k_B}{2\pi^3 v_s^3} \left(\frac{k_B T}{\hbar}\right)^4 \int_0^{0.95 \frac{\theta_D}{T}} \frac{x^5 e^x}{(e^x - 1)^2} dx$$

Where v_s is the arithmetic average speed of sound and θ_D is the Debye temperature.

S38. Description of calculation of Phonon Mean Free Path (l_{ph}), calculated using the method described in ²¹.

The phonon mean free paths for θ_{D1} and θ_{D2} extracted from modelling of the heat capacity data measured for CuBiSeCl_2 were calculated using the equation for the lattice thermal conductivity (κ_{latt}):

$$5. \quad \kappa_{latt} = \frac{1}{3} c_p l_{ph} v_s$$

Where c_p is the specific heat capacity. Here, we treat $\kappa_{tot} \approx \kappa_{latt}$ given that the electronic contribution to the lattice thermal conductivity is negligible as confirmed by resistivity measurements. This equation is rearranged to:

$$l_{ph} = \frac{3\kappa_{tot}}{c_p v_s \rho}$$

Where the material density (ρ) is included to return a phonon l_{ph} in metres.

The mean free paths determined from this method are shown in the table S39.

S39. Calculated Phonon Mean Free Paths

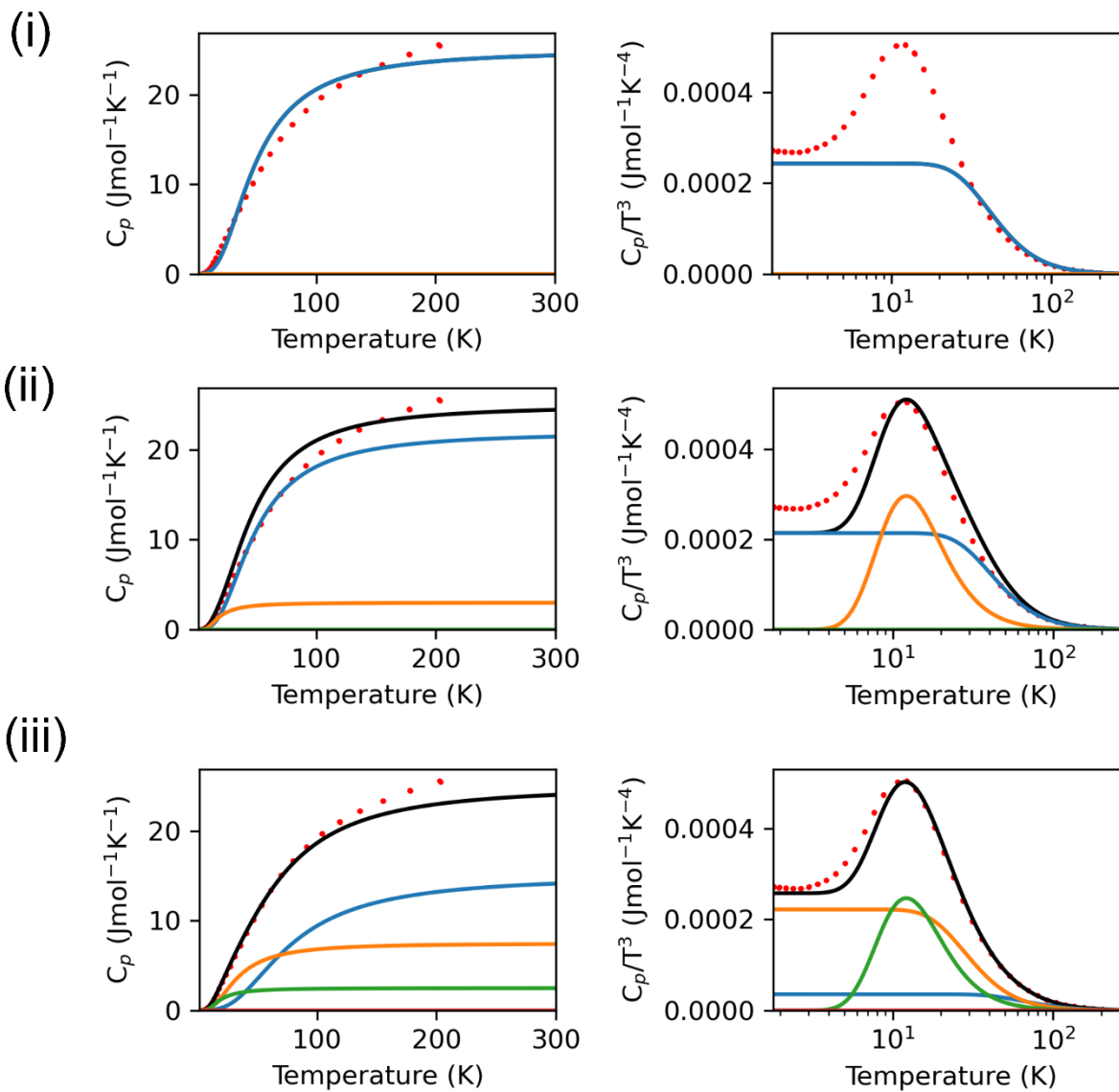
Debye Temperature (θ_D) [K]	Velocity of Sound (v_s) [ms^{-1}]	Phonon Mean Free Path (l_{ph}) [m]
320	3059.45	1.54
138	1319.39	3.56

S40. Specific Heat Modelling Prefactors

Compound	θ_{D1} (K)	θ_{D2} (K)	θ_{E1} (K)	θ_{E2} (K)	γ ($\text{Jmol}^{-1}\text{K}^{-2}$)
CuBiSeCl₂	320	138	60	28	0.00009
<i>Prefactors</i>	0.618	0.28	0.10	0.002	/

As required, the Debye and Einstein modelling prefactors sum to 1.

S41. Modelling of Specific Heat Capacity Data using (i) 1 Debye term (ii) 1 Debye and 1 Einstein term (iii) 2 Debye terms and 1 Einstein term. No linear contributions were used in the fitting shown here, and all Debye and Einstein prefactors summed to 1 in each case.



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