

BEYOND THE COUNTRY HOUSE: SPACES, CONNECTIONS & PERCEPTIONS



ONE-DAY CONFERENCE
MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
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Cover image courtesy of Dr Bethan Scorey

CALL FOR PAPERS

The country house has been a major focus of research for academics and heritage professionals alike for many years, but what about the historic houses, structures and spaces that do not fit under the traditional country house umbrella? These include different types of houses such as villas, townhouses, hunting lodges and royal residences; ancillary buildings on the wider country house estate; and houses with multiple lives that served different functions. These structures and spaces have always existed but have been eclipsed by the country house itself. By bringing them into the scholarly conversation we can create a better understanding of the ways in which people designed and used their various houses throughout history. Country houses were not ‘frozen in time’ but instead had long, multifaceted histories worth exploring. Moreover, English houses have tended to dominate country house studies and by broadening our horizons we can ensure a more holistic understanding of historic houses across Britain.

Beyond the Country House taps into the concepts of domestic history and historic house studies to explore how we define, categorise, research and interpret historic houses. We invite proposals for 15–20-minute papers, from a range of disciplines and time periods, dealing with any aspect of historic houses in the United Kingdom and the British Isles, but also elsewhere in Europe.

Proposals might engage with, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- Houses outside of England; international comparisons.
- Alternative house types related to the social elite and upper middling. Castles, royal residences, townhouses, villas, hunting lodges, seaside resorts, parsonages and cottages.
- Networks of houses within an estate or family and how people moved between them.
- Country Houses converted for/ or from different functions: abbeys, castles, war hospitals, hotels, museums, etc.
- The wider estate landscape: stables, barns, follies and ornamental structures, gardeners’ cottages, etc.

Abstracts of c.250 words (with brief bio) should be sent to Alyssa Myers by **31 December 2026** at the following address:
alyssa.myers@stu.mmu.ac.uk