

**THE VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE GROUP**

**WINTER CONFERENCE 2023/4**

**New Developments in Dendrochronology and  
its impact on Vernacular Architecture**



**Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th January 2024**

**College Court Conference Centre, Knighton Road,**

**Leicester, LE2 3UF**

# **New Developments in Dendrochronology and its impact on Vernacular Architecture**

There have been significant developments in dendrochronological dating over the past 10 years and much of this has had important implications for vernacular building research. New complementary techniques have opened up opportunities to date other wood types and timbers derived from short-lived trees and increased the number of buildings that can be accurately dated. This has allowed dendrochronology to contribute to vernacular building studies in a wider number of areas, moving beyond the dating of individual buildings to contribute to studies of settlements and regions and contribute to other debates.

The conference will cover new techniques, dating of other timber types, including imported timbers, and the contribution of dendrochronology to wider studies on vernacular building. The emphasis throughout the conference will be on case studies and practical applications of techniques to vernacular buildings.

The IHBC recognises that this programme may provide part of the compulsory CPD requirements of a Full Member



## The Conference Venue

College Court is a Grade II listed building whose character and design reflect its 1960 origins. Originally built as a hall of residence for University of Leicester students, the days of student living have ended and following a £17m refurbishment, College Court is now a state-of-the-art conference venue and hotel. Set in landscaped grounds, there is ample parking for delegates arriving by car. Further details on how to get there are on the final page of this leaflet.

All accommodation is single occupancy with double beds and en-suite facilities; couples may, however, choose to share (please indicate on your booking form) enabling the Winter Conference maximum use of the accommodation.

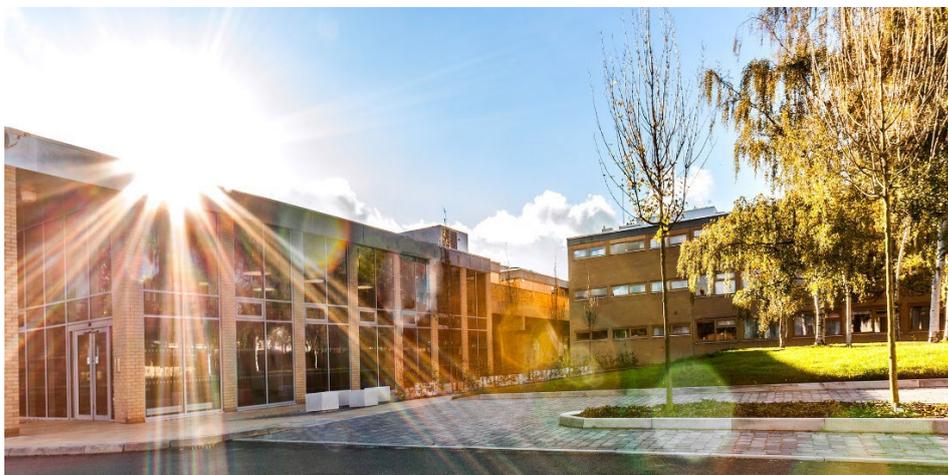
All needs can be catered for including accommodation for visitors with disabilities and delegates with special dietary requirements. All facilities, including the conference suite and dining room are within the same building. The hotel has a bar which will be open on Saturday evening.

As in the past, a room has been set aside adjacent to the conference hall for the free display and sale of members' literature. We also welcome displays and information boards from individuals or our affiliate Groups, including details of current or past projects, which may be of interest to delegates. Please contact the Winter Conference Secretary if you are interested in a stand: [winter-conference@vag.org.uk](mailto:winter-conference@vag.org.uk).

**College Court Conference Centre, Knighton Road, Leicester LE2 3UF**

**Tel: 0116 244 9669      Email: [info@collegecourt.co.uk](mailto:info@collegecourt.co.uk)**

**[www.collegecourt.co.uk](http://www.collegecourt.co.uk)**



# CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

## Saturday 6th January

14.00 Welcome & Introduction

### Session 1

14.05 Nat Alcock (Independent researcher)  
The Tree-ring Database: 1978-2023: 4,000 dates and counting

14.35 Cathy Tyers (Dendrochronologist, Historic England)  
Scientific Dating and vernacular architecture

15:05 Robert Howard (Nottingham Tree Ring Dating Laboratory)  
Case study: Calverley Old Hall.

### 15.35 – 16.05 Tea and coffee

### Session 2 – Oxygen isotope analysis and Radiocarbon dating

16.05 Neil Loader (Prifysgol Abertawe/Swansea University)  
An introduction to stable isotope dendrochronology

16.45 Dan Miles (Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory)  
Stable isotope dendrochronology. Application to vernacular buildings

17.25 Alex Bayliss (Head of Scientific Dating, Historic England)  
Using radiocarbon dating to understand historic buildings

### 18:00 – 18:30 Break

### 18:30 Dinner

20.00-20.30 AGM

### Evening lecture

20:40 Danny McCarroll (Prifysgol Abertawe/Swansea University)  
Welsh Houses and the climate of the past

### 21:30 Bar

## **Sunday 7th January**

### **Session 3 – Beyond oak – dating from other wood species**

- 9:00 Ann Crone (AOC Archaeology Group) and Coralie Mills (Dendrochronologie) (paper given by Ann Crone)  
Home and away; the dendrochronology of pine in Scottish buildings
- 9:30 Rob Wilson (School of Earth & Environmental Sciences, University of St. Andrews)  
Blue Intensity and historical dating: Not just for conifers!
- 10:10 Dr Martin Bridge (Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory)  
Elm and dating prospects with additional analysis methods

### **10:50-11:20 Tea and coffee**

### **Session 4 – Dendro and its application to settlements and areas**

- 11:20 Steven J Allen (Conservation Dept, York Archaeology)  
Dates and the details: Constructing Anglo-Scandinavian Buildings in York
- 11:50 Duncan James (Insight Heritage)  
Pembridge village, Herefordshire in the light of dendro
- 12:20 Stephen Price (Independent researcher)  
The impact of dendro on understanding urban development in the Worcestershire towns of Droitwich and Bewdley

### **13:00-14:00 Lunch**

### **Session 5**

- 14:00 Ann Crone (AOC Archaeology Group)  
American oak imports to Britain and Ireland in the 18th and early 19th centuries; the dendrochronological evidence
- 14:40 Vincent Debonne (researcher, built heritage, Flanders Heritage Agency, Belgium)  
Towards tree-ring based chronologies of historical building materials and techniques. The example of Bruges (Belgium)
- 15:20 Chris Dyer (University of Leicester)  
The importance of tree ring dates in changing our understanding of the past

### **16:00 Close**

# Conference Fees and Booking

## Members Fee

The fee for the Winter Conference will be **£198 Resident** and **£138 Non-Resident**, including the evening meal, tea and coffee. Residents fee also includes Sunday morning breakfast. Unfortunately, we have had to raise the fee this year due to rising costs and the application of VAT.

## Non-Members Fee

Guests may be introduced by an existing member, subject to available places: £203 Resident and £143 Non-Resident.

## Payment

If you wish to attend, please send your electronic payment to the following details:

Vernacular Architecture Group  
Lloyds Bank  
Sort-code 30-93-48  
Account no. 02435275

So we can identify your payment, please quote your name as a payment reference

***In order to secure your place, all payments must be accompanied by a **BOOKING FORM** which should be sent to: [winter-conference@vag.org.uk](mailto:winter-conference@vag.org.uk)***

If you prefer, you may also pay by cheque. Please complete the Cheque Booking Form and return it with a cheque made payable to **The Vernacular Architecture Group** and post to:

Winter Conference Secretary (VAG)  
47 Percy Road  
Pocklington  
East Yorks, YO42 2LZ

## Closing date

Please note that places are limited, and we are operating on a first-come, first-served basis. Booking closes **15th December 2023**.

## Bursaries

Student members, recent graduates and early career professionals are eligible to apply for a bursary award for this conference. Please apply direct to the Secretary, email [secretary@vag.org.uk](mailto:secretary@vag.org.uk), or pay the conference fee to guarantee your place – a refund will be given if you are successful.

## **Affiliated Groups**

Subject to accommodation being available, Groups affiliated to the VAG may each send two of their members, who are not themselves full members of the VAG, at the normal conference fee.

Additional affiliated group members may attend at the Non-Members rate paying an addition a £5.00 supplement.

## **Cancellations**

Members cancelling after the close of registration may be liable for all costs unless your place can be re-sold. In addition, a minimum cancellation fee of £10 may be applied. Should you need to cancel, please notify the Winter Conference Secretary as early as possible on **07835 090 983**. In case of a last minute emergency, please inform the College Court Conference Office on **0116 244 9669**.

No refunds will be made should adverse weather conditions prevent attendance.

## **How to Get There**

The city of Leicester is more or less central to England and Wales and is well served by motorways, rail services and airports (Birmingham, East Midlands and Manchester).

**By Car:** College Court is conveniently located within easy reach of the M1 and M69 motorways. Please use the postcode **LE2 3UF** or Knighton Road, Leicester when using a SatNav / Google Maps.

College Court offers ample complimentary car parking spaces, including designated disabled bays. Access is available from Knighton Road and barriers control access to and from the car park.

**By Rail:** Leicester is well served by rail with direct lines from London St Pancras (1hr 10mins), Birmingham (55mins), Sheffield (1hr) and Lincoln (1hr 50mins); from Leeds (2hrs) change at Derby / Sheffield. For further information call National Rail Enquiries on 03457 48 49 50 or visit [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk).

**By Bus from the Station:** Arriva bus service 44 and 44A (South Wigston / Wigston Magna) runs past the venue from the station (approximately every 15 minutes on a Saturday). Ask for the bus stop at the end of Queens Road, opposite College Court. Visit the Arriva website for a full timetable:

<https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/midlands/bus-travel-in-leicester>

**By Taxi from the Station:** (1.4 miles) There is a taxi rank based at Leicester Train Station.

**On Arrival:**

Please report to reception. If you are staying in the hotel, you will be provided with your room key. Keys will be issued from 13:00 to 13:50 hours (subject to room cleaning) giving you opportunity to take your luggage to your room before the start of the conference. Should there be insufficient time, please leave your bags in your car and check in later. Please note there is very limited storage at reception.

**Badges:**

You will be issued with a name badge as you enter the conference room on the first floor.

**Please note refreshments cannot be purchased at College Court on arrival, and door keys will not be issued before 13:00. The programme will commence promptly at 14:00.**

