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Next meeting

Wednesday 19 February, 2pm via Zoom link
Prof Paul Salvesson

'Rockets, Lions and Planets: the significance of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway'

Paul is chair of the Rocket 2030 Partnership which is planning the celebrations for the 200th anniversary of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 2030. Paul will cover the historical significance of the railway and the events that preceded it - and offer a glimpse of plans for 2029 and 2030.

- If you wish to attend, please email the Society's Hon Secretary on secretary@hslc.org.uk to receive the meeting link.

The video of our November speaker meeting, on the CILIP local studies toolkit, can now be viewed on YouTube, on the Society's channel: <https://youtu.be/Hwrw5NXHE2I>

Annual General Meeting

19 March, 2-4pm, Liverpool Athenaeum

The Society's AGM will be held in person at the Liverpool Athenaeum (Library Reading Room) on Wednesday 19 March, 2-4pm.



It will be followed at approximately 3pm by a lecture by Professor John Sturzaker FRTPI, Ebenezer Howard Professor of Planning at the University of Hertfordshire (pictured left):

'Green Belts in Merseyside: A Bourgeois Conspiracy Against the Urban Proletariat?!'

Green belts have been part of the UK planning system for more than 70 years, and are perhaps unique as an example of a social policy which is largely unchanged over that period. This lecture will explore the origins of green belts in the UK, and on Merseyside, trace their influence since their introduction, and consider how they might (need to) change in the future.

N.B. The Athenaeum is not fully accessible.

Web editor needed -- can you help the work of the Society?

We would be delighted to hear from members who could help to look after our website (with the assistance of our contracted web developer) and social media accounts. If you have some free time and an interest in this role, please email secretary@hslc.org.uk and we will be happy to explain what's involved.



Forthcoming events

23 April 2025 Online lecture via Zoom: Dr Lewis Darwen, 'Strikers and "knobsticks": Intimidation and violence during the Preston Strike and Lock-Out of 1853-54'

May 2025 Mike Stammers Memorial Lecture, in-person event (details TBC)

18 June Online lecture via Zoom (details TBC)

17 September 2025 Online lecture via Zoom (details TBC).

Increased annual subscription

Members will be aware that at the start of this year the annual subscription was increased to £25.

It had remained at its previous level for a number of years and, with increasing production and distribution costs, the increase was unavoidable.

The revised price, we are sure you agree, still remains excellent value and entitles you to receive the annual volume of *Transactions*, newsletters and attendance at the Society's lectures.

Please check the Society's website and social media channels to keep abreast of programme updates.

Book Review

Steve Hindle, *The Social Topography of a Rural Community. Scenes of Labouring Life in Seventeenth-Century England*, Oxford University Press, 2023. £100

Despite its formidable price and the fact that its specific subject matter is an individual Warwickshire parish, this book merits a wide readership. Like Tupling's *Economic History of Rossendale* (1927) and Hoskins' *The Midland Peasant* (1957) – a study of Wigston Magna in Leicestershire – Hindle's book has a resonance both in terms of its methodology and findings which extends far beyond its immediate boundaries. Assisted, undoubtedly, by an enviably rich collection of primary sources – visual as well as written – the author animates his findings in such a compelling way as to demand his readers' attention. Space, place and flow are all vividly brought to life in these pages as Hindle skilfully negotiates a path through the inadequacy of definitions of 'community' based chiefly on village and estate. Here instead we are offered detailed, convincing analyses of social topographies, occupational identities, neighbourliness, local office-holding, the politics of probate, buying and selling, 'task-scapes' and even 'grief-scapes'.

Some monographs, however successful on their own terms, remain imprisoned within their particular findings. This book most emphatically is not. Conceptually and methodologically, it is a truly path-finding book which *all* regional and local historians with an interest in the early modern period should read and ponder.

Professor R.C. Richardson