



## Essex Historic Buildings Group



Day School Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2026

### THE VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE OF EASTERN ENGLAND: an exploration of the similarities & differences

At Anglian Ruskin University, Bishops Hall Lane, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1SQ



*Wide stud spacing at the medieval hall house, White House, Wacton, Norfolk*



*Mud & stud, The Cabin, Thimbleby, Lincolnshire*



*Close studding at the 16<sup>th</sup> century White Hart, Yeldham, Essex*

#### PROGRAMME

9.30 **Chairman's introduction and welcome**

9.40 **Essex. 'Its character in context'.**

David Andrews

The relationship between different building types and the way their features change over time will be explored, highlighting local and regional variation and the possible factors behind it.

*David Andrews is an archaeologist and historic buildings adviser who has worked for Essex County Council for 30 years. Prior to that he worked for the DoE in the Central Excavation Unit, and in Italy where he did research and ran excavation projects.*

10.25 **Hertfordshire**

Lee Prosser

Like many counties Hertfordshire shares broad affinities with the traditions of surrounding areas. Eastern Hertfordshire is part of Greater Essex while the west forms part of the dip slope of the Chiltern Hills and so looks more like Buckinghamshire. However it has both early and quite distinctive timber-framing which might draw on traditions further afield.

*Dr Lee Prosser is Curator of Historic Buildings at Historic Royal Palaces, and is a specialist in architecture and the practicalities of conserving historic buildings. His areas of research focus include historic staircase.*

11.10 Tea

11.40 **Norfolk – “Do Different” – Norfolk's Motto**

Ian Hinton

Norfolk's buildings do have some differences from those in neighbouring counties in both form and detail. Are they due to local craft traditions or are there wider underlying reasons?

*Dr Ian Hinton took RICS exams in the 1960s but worked in IT. He took a Masters and PhD in Landscape History after early retirement to Norfolk. He has been involved with the Norfolk Historic Buildings Group since its inception, and has been its editor and chair for the last 10 years.*

12.25 **Discussion**

12.30 **Lunch**

13.45 **Suffolk - a county between**

John Walker

South Suffolk's vernacular architecture is similar to Essex while that to the north is said to belong to Norfolk but Suffolk is more than this with its timber-framed aisled halls, Wealdens and lobby entrance houses.

*John Walker is a lecturer, writer and researcher on historic timber framed buildings. He edited the book, published by EHBG, The English Medieval Roof, and has published some 30 articles on various aspects of vernacular timber framed buildings.*

- 14.30 **Lincolnshire** Jenne Pape & Mark Gardiner  
Lincolnshire's vernacular buildings are eclectic but share some characteristics, especially an economy of materials and responsiveness to their environment. This session will explore some of the methods devised, including mud and stud, and consider the survival of the county's medieval and early modern buildings of both stone and timber.  
*Jenne Pape is an independent researcher exploring the archaeology and history of Lincolnshire buildings with a passion for the county's indigenous building techniques, and in particular its Mud and Stud buildings.*  
*Prof. Mark Gardiner is Professor Emeritus of Medieval Archaeology at the University of Lincoln and has worked on the archaeology of excavated and standing medieval rural buildings.*
- 15.30 Tea
- 16.00 **Leicestershire, Rutland & Northamptonshire: Medieval carpentry on the stone belt** Nick Hill  
This session will provide a contrast with the five eastern counties so far discussed. Timber-framing is rare on the Jurassic stone belt except in towns. Crucks are the dominant form in smaller houses, but a fine group of early base cruck/short principal roofs survive in larger buildings.  
*Nick Hill is a buildings archaeologist with a particular interest in and publications on English halls and chamber blocks of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century. In his local region, his studies include the early halls at Oakham Castle, Leicester Castle and Nassington Prebendal Manor (Northants).*
- 16.45 **Discussion**
- 17.00 **Close**

Also in the hall will be the EHBG's cash bookstall of secondhand books for you to purchase

**Cost of the Day School**  
**without lunch: £50 (£45 members)**  
**with lunch: £66 (£61 members)**

**Tickets for the Day School can be purchased only from the  
EHBG website, <https://www.ehbg.co.uk>**

**NOTE bookings for food must be made by Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2026; none can be made after this**

Cheques are no longer accepted. Further information is available from Martin Bridge – Email: [marbrdg@aol.com](mailto:marbrdg@aol.com)  
or John Walker, 07754 536446 Email: [englishmedievalroof@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:englishmedievalroof@hotmail.co.uk)

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**Anglian Ruskin University** is a 10 minute walk from Chelmsford Station

**No car parking is available at the University.**

Pay and display parking is available at Rectory Lane West Long Stay, CM1 1RE  
The two Chelmsford Park and Ride buses stop at the University: use either  
Sandon 701 off Junction 18 of the A12 – post code CM2 7RU  
or Chelmer 702 from 3 Pratts Lane Farm, CM3 3PR off the A130

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### **Food**

**The optional Lunch consists of a Vegetarian Finger Buffet** provided by the University's catering department  
consisting of sandwich & wrap platter (v),  
seasoned potato wedges (vgn),  
chef's choice savoury bite (vgn),  
mini cake (v), fruit basket (vgn), water, juice

Please note Anglian Ruskin University does not allow any food **not** supplied by the University to be consumed on the site. There are a small number of food suppliers within a 10 minute walk of the University supplying sandwiches, pizzas and Chinese takeaway.

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This event is not affiliated with Anglia Ruskin University in any capacity and views expressed during the day school are not those of the University.