Call for Abstracts

Building Practice: Regulation, Corruption and Adaptation

CHS Annual Conference in collaboration with Cambridge Faculty of Architecture
Queens' College, Cambridge, Friday 25 - Sunday 27 September 2026

The aim of this year's Annual Construction History Society Conference from the **25-27 September 2026** is to explore the history of regulation and corruption in the building industry. The first day will be devoted to this theme. Topics might include (but are not limited to):

- Corruption in contracting, including in material and labour supply chains
- Legal cases in building projects
- Guilds and regulation
- Building regulations and practices created or modified to prevent corruption
- Failures and other built effects caused by illegal or irregular practices
- Thefts from building sites and steps taken to prevent them
- Historiographical approaches, sources, and methods that allow insights into these processes

This topic is not aimed at a particular historical period or geography. Abstracts are welcome from any period, for instance, those looking at ancient Chinese building practices or construction in European colonies will be as acceptable as those looking at twentieth-century globalised contracting concerns. The object is to study the interactions between regulation and compliance and the barriers and hurdles to change.

The second day will consider any paper on the subject of construction history including a special session on fountains and water supply.

This is a history conference. The review panel will only accept papers that are based on historical research, not surveys of contemporary practice or conservation.

Abstract submission

Abstracts should be 300-500 words long and should include the full names, academic affiliation or employer, a description of the subject proposed, the sources to be used, and where it fits within or how it relates to the current literature on the topic, together with address and email contact details. Submissions should be made to chs@aha.cam.ac.uk. The submission date for the abstracts is **15 February 2026**.

Process and Paper Submission

The abstracts will be peer-reviewed and the authors informed of the results by **15 March 2026**. The final paper must be submitted by **1 May 2026**. Final papers will be 5000 words/30,000 characters and can include up to 10 images. The editors reserve the right to reject papers that do not meet the necessary standards at this stage.

Publication

Successful papers must be submitted by **1 May 2026** and will be prepared for publication and printed in July/August. The proceedings are published as an edited book with an ISBN number published and available on the first day of the conference.

> **All final accepted papers must be presented at the conference by at least one of the authors**

Papers will only be accepted by those who are prepared deliver their papers in person.

The conference runs from **25-27 September 2026** in Queens' College, Cambridge. **Please do not submit an abstract if you are unable to present on those dates**