



The Medieval Settlement Research Group in 2024

It's been another busy year for the MSRG. At our AGM in December last year we said farewell to our outgoing President, Carenza Lewis. Carenza had the difficult task of steering the Group through a period that included multiple lockdowns, during which – much like other groups – we had to find alternative ways to reach and engage with our members. Carenza led a series of hugely popular online seminars on Infrastructure Archaeology, and is currently editing a volume arising from this initiative that we hope will be published during the next twelve months. Committee member Gareth Davies also completed his term at the same time. We thank both Carenza and Gareth for sterling service over the last three years. At the same time, we were delighted to welcome our new President Dawn Hadley, and we look forward to working with her over the next three-year period. Also at the AGM, we welcomed back former President Stuart Wrathmell, who now becomes a Vice President, alongside Chris Dyer, Paul Everson and Robin Glasscock. Alan Aberg stepped down as Vice President, generously accepting the less hands-on role of Honorary Vice President [or just 'becoming an Honorary VP'?).

Our conference programme generally attracts large audiences, and the last twelve months was no exception. The theme for last December's Winter Seminar in Leicester was *Settlement at the Margins: Living on the Edge*, where sixty-nine attendees heard a series of excellent papers which included contributions focused on settlement in Scotland and Ireland from Elaine Jamieson (York) and Eugene Costello (Cork), the southwest of England from Stephen Rippon (Exeter) and David Stone (MSRG), and on Charnwood Forest in the Midlands from Ann Stones (Leicester). Following delegate and committee feedback, it has been decided to include a special section on this theme featuring some of the speakers' work in volume 40 of *Medieval Settlement Research*, which is due in 2025. In May, our Spring Conference was held at the University of Nottingham and focused on *Bringing Disciplines Together in Medieval Settlement Studies*. Again, attendance was high, with sixty-five delegates enjoying seven interdisciplinary papers covering archaeology (Mark Gardiner, Lincoln), history (Mark Page, VCH), name-studies (Susan Kilby, Nottingham), zooarchaeology (Matilda Holmes,

Independent), isotopes and lipid residues (Lucy Cramp, Bristol), botany (Meriel McClatchie, UCD) and ceramics (Paul Spoerry, Independent).

Looking ahead, on Saturday 7th December 2024 we will return to Leicester for our Winter Seminar, where this year's programme promises to be very topical as speakers explore *Post-Pandemic Settlement*. This year's Seminar also sees a welcome return to students participating in our John Hurst Memorial Prize competition, and delegates will be able to enjoy the finalists' papers during the morning session. Plans are underway for a Spring Conference in 2025 hosted by the Centre for Regional and Local History at the University of Leicester on *Adaptations: Medieval Responses to Environmental Change*. Keep an eye on our website in the autumn as we finalise both event programmes: <https://medieval-settlement.com/events/upcoming-events/>.

Dr Susan Kilby
Hon. Secretary, MSRG