

The 2026 British Legal History Conference

Theme: Law and Governance

University of Nottingham, 1-4 July 2026

Abstracts are invited for the 2026 British Legal History Conference taking place at the University of Nottingham, on the theme of Law and Governance.

The theme of the 27th BLHC draws upon the longstanding interplay between law and governance, emphasising the ways in which legal systems are shaped by, and in turn shape, structures of authority and power. While law has often been understood as a system of rules or doctrines, its relationship with governance invites a broader exploration into how legal frameworks both reflect and construct political order, societal values, and modes of governance—be they ‘good’ or ‘bad’. The aim is to examine how legal norms, institutions, and practices interact with governing structures across different historical periods and geographic contexts, shedding light on how governance has been understood, contested, and institutionalised through law.

This conference welcomes papers that explore the intersections of law and governance in both theoretical and practical terms. While the theme encourages papers that engage with law as a tool of governance, we also invite submissions that interrogate the limits, challenges, and conflicts that arise when law intersects with power. We also welcome papers that examine the governance of legal systems themselves, including issues of judicial authority and legal professionalism.

Proposals are welcomed from scholars across a broad range of disciplines—whether historical, doctrinal, or contextual—although, as ever, the conference maintains a focus on Common Law jurisdictions. Submissions that explore comparative dimensions of governance, including comparisons between different models of legal and political authority, are also encouraged.

Proposals from postgraduate and early career researchers are welcome. Panel proposals will not be accepted.

**Please email abstracts (strict maximum 250 words) to
LL-BLHC@nottingham.ac.uk by 15 September 2025**