

MODERN BRITISH HISTORY AND THE 'ENVIRONMENTAL TURN'

16-17 SEPTEMBER 2026
LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD

CALL FOR PAPERS

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Environmental approaches are flourishing in modern British history. In contrast to their more peripheral standing within the field a few years ago, there are now papers and panels at the leading conferences, new articles and books, and exciting research networks. **It is an opportune moment to take stock of what might be called an emerging 'environmental turn' in British history.**

This **two-day workshop** will explore several questions. How can environmental history complement or offer alternatives to existing historiographical narratives and periodisations in British history? What new actors, events, or phenomena might come to the fore? How should it foster engagements with places beyond its national borders or with other disciplines? Is environmental history different from longstanding traditions of 'landscape' or 'urban' histories of Britain? What contributions can historians make to environmental advocacy and policymaking? And how might a focus on the environment reshape teaching in British history?

To take part, participants should submit a **300 word proposal for a short 'position paper' (approx. 2500 words) that will be pre-circulated at the workshop.** These position papers will address the place of environmental approaches and themes within modern British history (1800 to the present) from the perspective of the participant's own research. Participants will orally summarise their papers at the workshop. The event is free to attend and includes lunch and refreshments.

Submissions are welcomed across a range of perspectives and topics, including but not limited to: energy, extraction, non-human actors, pollution, toxicity, rural and urban landscapes, everyday environmental histories (including how they are shaped by class, gender, and race), imperialism and decolonisation, 'green' policy, activism, and the political economy of the natural world.

Please send proposals and a one-paragraph biography in a single PDF to andrew.seaton@manchester.ac.uk by 15 May 2026. Please also direct enquiries to this address.

This event is organised by Dr. Max Long (Oxford) and Dr. Andrew Seaton (Manchester).