



## LOCAL HISTORY DAY 2019

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Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL

Full details of the programme, and a booking form, will appear in the next issue of Local History News. Meanwhile, please put the date in your diary and we will look forward to seeing you in London on 1 June next summer.

As usual we will have two presentations on topical aspects of local history that are relevant to our members and friends throughout the United Kingdom, demonstrating the up to date research that is in progress.

In recognition of the centenary of the Representation of the People Act 1918, which gave the vote to some (but not all) women, we are delighted that Professor Krista Cowman, University of Lincoln, will give the morning presentation on the extension of the suffrage. This has been marked in many ways around the country. Maybe you have been involved with local research on the topic, or your society has heard speakers who have investigated the changes that took place in 1918 and subsequently?

The 2019 BALH Annual Lecture will be given by Dr Rose Wallis from the University of the West of England. Her title is ***'Rulers of the county': the magistracy and the challenge of local government, c.1790-1834***. See opposite for further details. Dr Wallis is Associate Director of the Regional History centre at UWE, and was the academic consultant for the newly re-opened Shire Hall in Dorchester which is now an historic courthouse museum.

In addition the programme includes the presentation of certificates for the three categories of BALH Awards for Local History. These are to encourage research and publication, to recognise individual personal achievement, and for a society newsletter. In the middle of the day we hold the BALH Annual General Meeting, when members can contribute to the organisation and development of the Association.

There will be bookstalls and society displays to browse during the lunch break.

## BALH ANNUAL LECTURE 2019

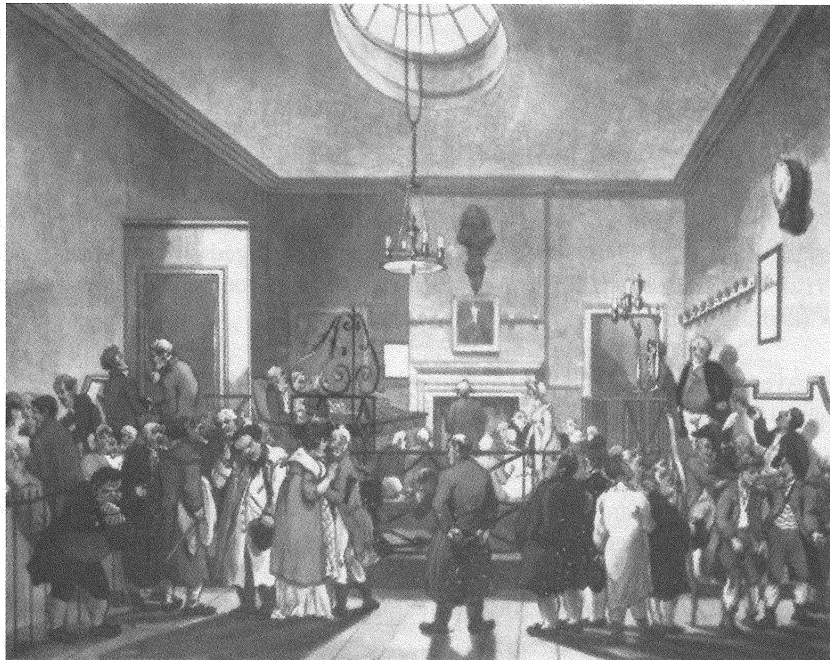
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### ***'Rulers of the county': the magistracy and the challenge of local government, c.1790-1834***

**Dr Rose Wallis**

Before the expansion of professional policing in the 1830s, the magistracy, or justices of the peace, were the front-line of law enforcement. As well as being responsible for all criminal proceedings, they were tasked with the administration of local government. But these men were untrained and unsalaried. Drawn from the local gentry, their power was predicated as much on their social authority as their office. They were, as the Webbs characterised them, the 'rulers of the county.'

At the end of the eighteenth-century, rising population, war and political agitation, economic depression, and increasing poverty and crime, presented the magistracy with unprecedented challenges. Many local and family historians will have encountered the magistrates in quarter sessions records, Poor Law material and other community documentation – but how much do we really know about them? Using her research on Somerset and the South West, Dr Wallis will consider the form and function of the magistracy, and how they attempted to adapt and maintain their authority in this tumultuous context.



*Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827) plate 11 of his Microcosm of London showing Bow Street Office (or Magistrates' Court).*