



**STUDY DAY – Saturday 3 October 2026, 10:30 – 4:15 (from 10am)**  
**WILTSHIRE TOWNS AND THEIR BUILDINGS – HIDDEN GEMS**

**JOHN CHANDLER - A CLOSER LOOK AT CHIPPENHAM**

John has pursued a varied career in local history, including running the Hobnob Press, through which he has authored many books. Since 2011 he has also written and edited for the Victoria County History series in both Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. Now that the Victoria History has completed and published its decade-long research into one of Wiltshire's largest and most successful towns, John reflects on some of the more intriguing and unnoticed aspects of Chippenham's layout, buildings and suburbs, and on the historian's task of using the documentary record to encourage local residents to observe their familiar streetscapes with renewed interest and enthusiasm.

**SUZANNE KEENE – Oriel Cottage, Salisbury: Timber and Text** Suzanne is a Reader Emeritus at University College London. She has worked in archaeology and museums for 36 years, and thereafter in UCL directing Museum Studies. She has been the hon. chair of the Campaign to Protect Rural England South Wiltshire Group.

Oriel Cottage really is a hidden treasure - the oldest part is about 1450-1475, but it's invisible from Castle Street due to the Georgian rebuild of the frontage. Since I became the current owner in 2022 I have been irresistibly drawn to learning about its history. Was the house a small open hall in its earliest form, as some structural evidence suggests? Not all experts concur with this. Now records in the translated Salisbury Domesday Books suggest some of the 15<sup>th</sup> century ownership. I'll look forward to discussion and challenges.

**STEVE HOBBS – Westbury: Town and Borough**

Steve is a retired archivist who divided his working life between Cornwall and Somerset, finally spending the last 30 years in Wiltshire. He has written and lectured on local history subjects and is the editor of two volumes for the Wiltshire Record Society. Resident in Westbury, Steve takes a special interest in the town, and his talk will take us through its history from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, looking at both public and private buildings.

**JAMES HOLDEN – Town Halls and Market Halls – a Fine Heritage**

James has a long-term interest in building history. Since moving to Wiltshire in 2014 he has written three books for Wiltshire Buildings Record on gate lodges, non-conformist chapels, and public buildings. Town halls and market halls symbolise civic pride and are often amongst the most prominent and splendid of all town buildings, yet many struggle for purpose in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. James Holden describes their history and tells the often surprising stories of some of Wiltshire's most intriguing examples, reflecting also on the challenges which now face them.

**DOROTHY TREASURE - 1-3 Northgate St, Devizes – A tale of two fires** Dorothy is WBR's principal buildings historian, with over 30 years' experience in the study of vernacular buildings. She worked on National Trust's Survey of Wessex estates and cut her teeth on farmsteads, mills and breweries in North Wilts. Earlier this year no.2 Northgate Street, Devizes was demolished after a disastrous fire. In watching this process we discovered some surprising evidence about the previous buildings on the site. A rare opportunity to also record the buildings on either side helped to complete this picture. This talk illustrates the fascinating discoveries made, and gives a closer look at these important town centre buildings.

**At The Bromham Community Hub, New Road, Bromham, SN15 2JB. Tickets £27, Senior Citizens £26, Students £22 or £20.50 Members Optional simple buffet lunch, booked in advance, £13.50 per head**

**Tel : 01249 705508 Email: [dorothy.treasure@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:dorothy.treasure@wiltshire.gov.uk)**

**[www.wiltshirebuildingsrecord.org.uk](http://www.wiltshirebuildingsrecord.org.uk)**