



**WELCOME & UNWELCOME GUESTS**  
**THE VISITOR & THE COUNTRY HOUSE**

**CALL FOR  
PAPERS**

**Centre for the Study of Historic Irish Houses and Estates,  
History Department, Maynooth University  
18th Annual Conference, 11-13 May 2020**



THE THEME OF THE 18TH ANNUAL HISTORIC HOUSES CONFERENCE, to be held at Maynooth University on 11-13 May 2020, will be **‘Welcome and Unwelcome Guests: The Visitor and the Country House’**.

Country houses have always been a magnet for visitors, rarely have their doors been entirely closed to the outside world. In early days individuals with the correct social credentials could gain entry, while visitors such as royalty were self-invited guests. With the rise of the railway and then the motor-car houses have become accustomed to mass visits, spawning the heritage industry of today.

However, houses have also attracted less welcome incomers: looters, arsonists, emigrés, revolutionaries, the politically undesirable, carpetbaggers, and even photographers whom one owner described as worse than burglars.



This conference will explore the many kinds of visitors who have crossed the thresholds of country houses, and how they have recorded their impressions – whether in sketches, journals, guest-books, works of fiction, photographs, or on the pages of Trip Advisor. Have owners always been hospitable towards their guests, and have visitors respected what was on offer in these houses? How have owners adapted their homes from residences into public attractions? Can private entertainment and commercial activity live side-by-side, satisfying invited guest and paying tourist alike, while generating pleasure and profit for all?

**Papers on any aspect of country house visiting in Ireland, the UK, Europe, or the wider world will be considered. Abstracts of no more than 400 words should be sent to Professor Terence Dooley and Professor Christopher Ridgway before 5 January 2020 at the following addresses: [terence.a.dooley@mu.ie](mailto:terence.a.dooley@mu.ie) and [cridgway@castlehoward.co.uk](mailto:cridgway@castlehoward.co.uk)**

