

Call for Papers

International Conference 2027 in Lütjenburg: Motte-and-Bailey Castles in Medieval Europe – Research, Reconstruction and Heritage Management

33rd Annual Conference of the Wartburg Society for the Study of Castles and Palaces (WBG) in Lütjenburg (6–9 May 2027)

In 2027, the 33rd Annual Conference of the WBG will be held in cooperation with the Department of History at Christian-Albrechts-Universität Kiel, Department of Regional History (Prof. Dr Oliver Auge), the University of Szczecin, Institute of History (Prof. US Dr hab. Felix Biermann), the Aarhus University, Department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies (Assoc. Prof. Dr Rainer Atzbach), the Archaeological Society of Schleswig-Holstein e. V. and the Society of Friends of the Medieval Castle in Lütjenburg e.V. The venue is Lütjenburg (Plön district) in Schleswig-Holstein, where a reconstructed motte-and-bailey castle is situated (<https://www.turmhuegelburg.de/home.html>).

Taking Lütjenburg as its starting point, the conference aims to focus on the phenomenon of motte-and-bailey castles across its full thematic scope. In addition to case studies of individual sites, overview papers may also present entire regions. Particular attention will be given to questions of chronology, architectural form, defensive elements and the respective history of use, including continuity into the late medieval and early modern period. A second section will address reconstructions of motte-and-bailey castles and hillforts both on full-scale (1:1) and using virtual reality as part of ‘public history’, experimental archaeology and cultural tourism, as well as museum education, whilst also examining the general heritage conservation challenges involved in preserving castle sites. The third section will extend beyond the narrower topic of motte-and-bailey castles: it focuses on current research into castles and palaces in the conference region of East Holstein and neighbouring areas. The conference will be accompanied by an excursion to castles in the vicinity of Lütjenburg.

Presentations should not exceed 20 minutes, with the option of a subsequent 10-minute discussion. The conference languages are primarily German and English.

Proposals for papers should be submitted, together with an abstract of no more than half a page, by 30 September 2026 to the Chair of the WBG by email (gvbueren@juelich.de). It is planned to publish the proceedings in a volume of the series ‘Forschungen zu Burgen und Schlössern’ (Michael Imhof Verlag). Speakers will be exempted from the conference fee. Whether any further costs can be covered will depend on the successful acquisition of additional third-party funding.